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COMING AND GOING.

BY DR. C. D. GARDETTE.

As, from the dewy dusk of April skies,
With Day's bright crown his regal brows adorning,
The sun woos budding earth renewed to rise,
And win the fruitful promise of the morning.

So when Life's morning rises from the void,
Flushed with the promise of a noontide glory,
The budding heart, by Hope's bright pinions buoyed,
Goes forth unheeding all Life's elder story.

With Faith and Hope through years, alas! how few!
The youth by rosy pathways hastens, humming
A gay refrain, whose chorus, ever new,
Rings with the spell-word, "*coming*"—always "*coming!*"

But when, through many a change of sea and sky,
The sun hath slowly risen and fast descended,
Till from the horizon, with regretful eye,
He sinks through angry clouds, and day is ended.

The storm-tossed flowers of weary earth reclose,
And many a bud that gave at morn fair token
Of noontide bloom, is but a withered rose—
Its fragrance gone, its every promise broken.

So when the Day of Life, through storm and blast,
Hath struggled fitfully beyond its zenith,
What wonder if, regretful, down the Past
The heart shall look and question what Life meaneth?

No more beguiled by Hope through flowery ways;
The path has long been rude and thorny growing;
And in the chant the heart shall henceforth raise,
The choral word is "Going!" ever "Going!"

NORWOOD;

OR

VILLAGE LIFE IN NEW ENGLAND.

BY HENRY WARD BEECHER.

[Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1867, by ROBERT BONNER, in the Clerk's Office of the District Court for the Southern District of New York.]

CHAPTER XXX.

DOCTOR BUELL'S SORROW.

The trustees of Norwood Academy consulted the universal wish when they appointed Barton Cathcart to take charge of the institution. He did not long hesitate. Local prejudice in Barton's case was disarmed, and none more ardently urged him to accept than those who had best known him from his boyhood. On the other hand, there were weighty reasons for assuming this position. It gave him an immediate pecuniary support. It spared him a precipitate choice of his profession. It brought him home for a term of years to his family, and especially to his mother. When the transition from boyhood takes place, men are apt to assert their individuality with some jealousy of parental interference, and break away in search of their own liberty. After manhood is reached, and something of the world is learned, men go back to their homes with a love which is no longer a mere childish feeling, but an educated affection, competent to weigh and measure. This second love of a child to its parents is so much richer, deeper, and more enduring than any other, that it is worth any price of intermediate suffering.

But another reason more influential than all was, perhaps, the least demonstrative in his thoughts. He would be near to Rose Wentworth.

In this case, as in so many others, in the life of every honorable nature, his feelings proved wiser than any mere reasonings would have done. Rose was not one likely to "fall in love." She might grow to love. But it would be a gradual unfolding.

Being richly benevolent, affable with all, buoyant in spirits, one not deeply acquainted with her nature would be apt to imagine himself rapidly advancing in her good graces, and would flatter himself that he had secured a sympathy which might be carried forward by his own will to every range of love. But, in a full and large nature, friendliness is but the outer court, love is the holy of holies. Into that enters only the ordained of God.

If Barton had been far wiser than he was in reading the secrets of the heart, he could not have done better than by leaving his hopes to Time, and to the results of a renewed intercourse, no longer as children, but as man and woman, developed by study, and ripened by some degree of experience in adult life.

Barton entered upon his duties with a calm earnestness which marked his nature. His spirit was soon felt in the whole school. Before the winter closed the Academy was filled to its utmost capacity. Selecting his own assistants, he brought to his aid those who would work in full sympathy with him.

He did not confine his efforts to the school alone. The village Lyceum opened for him a sphere of activity which he was not slow to enter.

He was foremost among the young men in all exhilarating and manly sports. He joined a military company, and becoming deeply interested in military science, soon rose to the command. In these and various other ways, Barton preserved vigorous health, and that sympathy with active daily life which prevented him from sinking into the recluse habits of a mere student, and from every trace or trait of pedagogic formality.

In school he was the master, and out of school the genial leader of his boys, and in both spheres ruled them apparently without an effort.

It was during this winter and spring of 1858 that two events occurred that produced the greatest effects upon his after life. Before entering upon the first and most momentous it is necessary to precede it by some notice of events which were in many respects intimately concerned with it.

Our readers have already formed some opinion of Dr. Buell. But thus far it has been casual and exterior. We must ask them now to go with us to the parson's house, and to see him in his family life, with all its peculiarities.

The minister's house was as white as paint could make it, and its window-blinds were of no flimsy Paris-green color, but of a good old-fashioned green—so green that you would almost think it black. Not a blind is open on the front—all is closed, orderly, clean. A front-door yard there is; in one corner, an elm-tree, whose wide-curving branches were the only graceful thing about the place; a row of maple-trees kept in a line along one side of the yard; and, in the far corner, a clump of lilacs, seven or eight stems springing from a centre, and grown almost to the dimensions of trees.

At the back of the house was a vegetable garden; and, at the far end, a stable large enough for a cow and horse, and for the shelter of an old-fashioned chaise. An outlying lot of land sufficed to furnish the hay required for the horse and cow, and a small strip was devoted to potatoes. The horse was the parson's favorite. He literally had no faults. He was never known to kick, or to bite anything but food. Hay constituting his principal food, a larger quantity was required than would have been if oats or corn had furnished more concentrated nourishment in smaller bulk. Nature, ever kind to her creatures, gradually enlarged the barrel of the horse until his belly was puffed out far beyond any requirements of beauty. A large, mild, and sleepy eye revealed but half the quietness of his disposition. His legs might be handled by boys. You might sit down safely between his hind legs. There was no liberty which you could not take, except that of fast driving. You might pour a bushel of potatoes suddenly upon his haunches without producing excitement—not, however, because he was lifeless, but from mere self-possession; for a peck of oats (a rarity seldom ventured!) at the other extremity quickly showed that there was life in him.

He was safe. "Slow and sure," was his maxim. When the good parson was once seated in the chaise, the events were as follows: when the self-possessed animal, with his head and neck declining a little below the line of his back, felt the reins in the doctor's hands, he opened his eyes; and having been standing on his three legs, the fourth crooked up and resting on the edge of the hoof, he brought them all squarely under him, as if saying, "I am all here, sir!" Next the doctor pulled both reins, and they were pulled. Then he lapped them both upon his back, with a gentle slap, and pulled one of them with some decision. The time had come. The horse started, walked into the road, and then, after several admonitions, fell into an easy jog, which satisfied the parson's ambition. But no persuasion could carry that trot up the slightest rise in the ground. It was this habit of stopping early in ascending and starting again late in descending hills, that secured to this matchless horse long life and immunity from strains. Dr. Buell innocently told Hiram Beers that he never used a bottle of liniment in his life!

Hiram waited till the parson was out of hearing, and then discoursed:

"Wal, I'd bet on that! Bottle of liniment! I should as soon think of liniment on a hoe-handle or a gun-stock! That horse thinks it's always Sunday, and that he's goin' to a funeral all the while. I'd give any body five dollars to git three miles an hour out of that critter! If there was two of 'em, they wouldn't go a mile an hour, and four such horses—good gracious! it would take a yoke of oxen to start 'em anyhow."

If you enter the front door of the minister's house the walls will shine upon you with the unblemished whiteness of "hard-finish." Not a spot of dirt, not an engraving, not a picture, was allowed to mar the fair expanse. The ceiling was white and glistening, the side walls were white; enter the parlor, a large room, consecrated to company, and if the walls had been cut through banks of snow they could not have been whiter or colder. The sitting-room was white and clean. The chambers were all white and all clean, and every chamber was like every other one, and they altogether lay like half-a-dozen eggs in a nest.

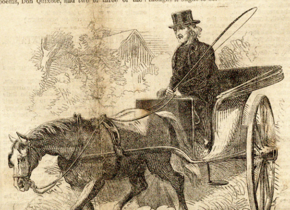
One or two extraordinary water-color pictures, executed by his wife, as the last consummate efforts of her expiring school-days, had been framed in black, and now hung in the sitting-room. It always pleased Dr. Buell to have visitors notice them, and his invariable comment was, "My wife's paintings!—when she was younger and less occupied. I am told that they are remarkable." They certainly were.

A portrait also, much smoked and tanned, hung over the fire-place. It was grim and sharp-eyed. Very badly painted, one derived from it a pleasure in thinking, "Nobody ever looked like that!"

The furniture of the house was very plain, in nowise tending to self-indulgence. The single symptom of luxurious ease was the rocking-chair.

But if once you sat down in it the illusory notion of luxury vanished. It was wooden throughout. Only if some one was sick in the house was there a cushion in it. Its joints by long use had formed a complaining habit, and you might in any part of the house know whether the rocking-chair was in active use. We are obliged to say that it was a treacherous chair. The rockers had been curved to such lines, that if you ventured beyond a very gentle motion the chair would give a backward lurch, as if going over, and there are few things more unsatisfactory to a sober-minded person, careful of appearances, than to be carried over backwards in the midst of a quiet conversation. It is true that the chair never did go over. The shape of the rocker was such, that when the victim had spread his arms and flirted his legs into the air, in an involuntary effort at equilibrium, the chair stopped and set itself firmly, as if it had been blocked, returning again to its normal state only upon a violent effort of its occupant. The neighbors were aware of this propensity and avoided the chair. Strangers usually had an experience with it. The good doctor, or his wife, for the hundredth time, re-assuring them, "Don't be alarmed. It won't go over. I never knew anybody to fall!"

The doctor's study was *the* room of the house. Two sides thereof were occupied by shelves laden with books. The supply of theology was large. The critical apparatus for studying both the classical languages and the Hebrew tongue was ample. Histories, sacred and profane, abounded. Select English literature was represented. The doctor's excellent sense was shown in the exclusion from his library of all novels, against which, if we were not writing a history which admits of no delay, we should pause to speak. The Pilgrim's Progress, Milton's Paradise Lost, Scott's Lady of the Lake, and kindred poems, Don Quixote, and two or three of the Waverley series, were found there. But these were not, in his judgment, proper to be called novels. They were beneficial stories. By novels he meant "fictions of an injurious tendency." Accordingly, while he admitted that stories might be sparingly read, novels were always to be avoided.



[illegible] BUELL'S "TURN-OUT."]

The order of the doctor's study was extreme. Regularity had well nigh become formality. Could all his books have been of one size, or could each shelf have presented an even line of well-matched books, it would have pleased him well.

But in spite of him his books would be picturesque. Some were in paper, and some in leather; some were of octavo size, and some duodecimo; some few had gilt backs, and others sombre black; paper backs in red, in green, in blue, in gray, and russet still added to the mixture. Some fat and thick books stood in a good-natured way, as if saying: "We've got all we want inside!" while, next to them, some thin volume would look as if pinched in its stomach and forever hungry for contents. There were aristocratic volumes—tall, most respectable, and self-important; and next to these, perhaps, a dumpy little volume, squat, like an asthmatic shoemaker.

Even Dr. Buell, when the afternoon sun poured a yellow light into his favorite study and lit up all the various faces of his books, was conscious in a dim way that there was something more pleasant in their looks than their mere order could account for. But ideality had been well nigh left out in the composition of his mind, and the logical faculty, strong by nature, had struck out its roots by use into all the ground, with such resolute and exhausting growth that the imagination, like a fruit-tree caught in a forest, could never grow larger than a bush, and bore neither fruit nor blossom.

He was thoroughly good. Conscience penetrated every faculty of his mind, and gave rest to none of them. As not unusually happens, he felt most condemned for those very qualities in which he excelled. Neither weather, nor weariness, nor occupation, nor sickness in any common measure could hold him back from those ministrations which he had assumed. Unselfish to a degree unusual even with the benevolent, he reproached himself every day with self-indulgence. Never sparing himself or his time when the poor or the sick needed his ministerial offices, he carried in his heart a feeling that he was guilty of much waste of time and of negligence in the best use of that time which he employed.

With the material world he had no other relations than such as served the practical and material wants of men. There was little beauty to him in the seasons, though much of usefulness. Colors had little charm for him. Forms seldom attracted his notice. In short, the artist eye and the poet's sympathy for nature seemed utterly foreign to his mind.

Mrs. Buell was one of those women who, alone, are feeble and colorless, but who, when joined to others, derive to themselves the strength and character of their surroundings. Like a vine, she had all the strength of the tree around which she twined and upon which she grew. Her father's house had been always the home of ministers visiting the town. She was educated to regard ministers of the Gospel as the complete ideals of manhood. When the prospect arose before her of being a minister's wife, she could hardly convince herself that the Lord had reserved for her so great a mercy. To her natural and ardent love of Dr. Buell as a man, she added the uttermost reverence for his office, and her household duties seemed to her a perpetual religious service, as much so as if she had lived in a temple, he a priest and she priestess. With a sweet, confiding nature she accepted her husband's mind, and only used her own when his was not at hand. She never disputed his word or doubted his wisdom. And when, inadvertently, she expressed views not in agreement with his, the moment he disagreed with her she yielded and changed her opinion, as if a God had spoken to her. This was not a grudging submission, nor the fruit of duty, and still less was it in a subservient spirit. Like pure water, she took the color of the sky and clouds that lay above her.

Of a sweet disposition, always inclined to do right almost without an effort, never doing enough, active beyond her strength, and neat to a degree that no description can measure, she made the Parson's home almost happier than he thought it ought to be.

"My dear [illegible], I sometimes [illegible] that we have too many good things in this life. Our chastisements are so few and so light that I query whether God loves us, 'for whom he loveth he chasteneth.'"

A slight blush of pleasure would come upon her delicate cheek. Sometimes she would say:

"If our boy had lived, we should have been too happy."

That boy died at twelve years of age. The neighbors thought that he was not a saint. Therein they differed with his mother. Besides him they had no children. That grief borne, all the rest of their life seemed tranquil and prosperous.

Unconsciously and gradually her husband became her god. All that he did was right. All that he said was true. He never made mistakes. Not to like her husband was to be bad, of course. To differ with him showed weakness of character. She repeated his sayings with an infantine simplicity. She wondered that other people did not talk more about him. Dr. Wentworth was a great man, because he was warmly attached to her husband. She would not hear a word against Tommy Taft, and she took every word of his speeches to her husband as literal and sober verity.

"There must be a seed of grace in him," she would say, "or he would not be so fond of good men."

We may be sure that this did not escape Tommy's eye. He would call at the Parson's house when he was pretty sure not to be at home.

"The Doctor's not at home, you say? That's my luck! But what a blessin' to this town to have such a minister in't! Sez I to Hiram, t'other day, sez I, 'Hiram, you ought to be a better man than you be, seein' you have sech extraordinary preachin' and example.' But Hiram, you know, marm, though nowise vicious, is not given to speritual things. More's the pity! But what a privilege it must be to you, marm, to be his wife! Remarkable that sech a blessin' should be given to just one woman! Your husband don't never swear, marm, does he?"

The start of unaffected amazement with which Mrs. Buell echoed the word "swear!" seemed infinitely gratifying to Tommy, who raised and lowered his shaggy eyebrows several times, saying with each movement:

"Of course not—of course not. I knew he didn't. If any body had told me that Dr. Buell swore, I wouldn't a b'lieved it on oath. Impossible! impossible! Jest think of it—the Doctor swearin'. Oh, it's beautiful to see a man that don't swear and don't want to. But really, marm—when you see how wicked folks is—what ugly things they will do—don't you think its kind o' natural to swear? Not profane swearin', of course, but pious swearin'."

"My dear," said Mrs. Buell to her husband, "don't you think Tommy Taft is near to the kingdom? He seems to me to have much that's good in him. I can't but hope there's a work going on slowly in him."

"Yes—very slowly."

For several winters Mrs. Buell had suffered from colds. Each year her system seemed less able to resist attacks and more and more weakened by them. She was herself not aware of danger. But her husband, instructed by Dr. Wentworth, was seriously uneasy. As winter drew near, her strength seemed failing. She struggled bravely and hopefully. But each month reduced the number of hours in which she could attend to household duties. Her face grew thin, but even more beautiful every week. Her eye was never brighter. Her cheek, like an October apple, showed by its brightness that the harvest time was drawing near.

Not a word was spoken by either of them of that Great Fear, which was dimly disclosing itself to her, and which had long been defined and clearly visible to him.

During the autumn, Dr. Buell had taken his wife, on various pretexts, to ride with him far oftener than was usual. As cold weather approached, he prepared his house for winter with more care than ever before. New arrangements for heating were introduced. The windows were calked and the doors listed to prevent drafts of air. Little by little the whole economy of the household revolved around this shadowy fear, of which no one spoke. Every one acted as if a danger impended, but no one uttered a word of it. Even to Dr. Wentworth Parson Buell spoke with muffled indirections, as though to put his fears into words would give them some advantage.

This could not last. Little by little the invalid yielded one and another task, saying:

"I don't know what ails me, but I grow so weak."

In vain were tempting dishes prepared; and jellies, cordials, wines, with which parishioners filled the house, gave no strength. The white upon her countenance grew whiter, and the scarlet more intense. With a gentle reluctance, she gave up one after another of her household duties, but strove to fulfil little personal services to her husband. She looked over his linen every week, and languidly repaired any little break. She laid out for him his Sunday apparel, and saw that his clean white handkerchiefs were duly laid upon his coat. One by one, even these small but precious duties of love were taken from her, and she seemed to herself, as by some invisible power, to be drifting further and further away from him.

It was one brilliant Sabbath morning in January that she had prepared for her husband his white cravat, which for many years she had fondly placed upon his neck, and tied in a perfect bow, smoothing the ends, and by dainty touches here and there giving the look of neatness and simplicity for which Dr. Buell was noted.

On this morning the bell tolled long for the minister. The deacons looked uneasily toward the door. Such a thing as tardiness was never known in Dr. Buell. What could keep him?

Deacon Trowbridge, big with an innocent sense of the importance of the matter, looked at the pulpit, then at Deacon Marble, then into the broad aisle, and then closed his eyes for a moment and cleared his throat. He repeated this service once or twice in an [illegible] and then slowly rose and went over to Deacon Marble to consult. [illegible] and the other nodded. then the other whispered and the [illegible]ded; then both of them looked perplexed. Meanwhile the boys tittered; for while the deacons were absorbed in each other, Dr. Buell had passed down the aisle and entered the pulpit, and his voice, opening the service, put a hasty end to the two deacons' perplexity.

What had detained him?

When he came that morning for his cravat, his wife with trembling hands essayed her accustomed offices. She laid back the collar of his vest, raised his shirt collar, and sought to clasp his neck with the cravat, but her little strength was gone. Panting, and smiling sadly, she sought to cover the failure by pleating the cravat a little differently, and again rose to place it round her husband's neck.

Her hand trembled and failed. Now, for the first time, the grief brought forth the confession:

"Oh, my husband, I shall never do it again. I am dying, and I must leave you."

Clasped in his bosom, she gave way to a paroxysm of weeping. There was silence. Tears poured down his face. With ineffable tenderness he bore her to the bed, and kneeling down by her side, he poured out his thanksgiving for all her love and service to him, in broken sentences, wet with tears, as if it were an offering of flowers wet with dew, and in solemn simplicity he gave her back to God, from whose hand he had taken her. The clouds rolled away. From that moment both of them spoke of her death with tender frankness.

When he arose in the pulpit that morning his voice did not falter. There was neither weakness nor excitement; but there was an irresistible fervor. Once or twice he came so near to the expression of feeling that all the house grew still, and the ticking of the round clock on the singing gallery could be plainly heard all over the church. It was but a moment's weakness, and his strong heart overcame the tendency, and his work went on to the end unfalteringly. Few ever forgot the strange solemnity of that morning.

Meanwhile a new energy seemed to fill the minister's soul. As he had been jealous always lest anything should withdraw him from his work, by any self-indulgence, so now he was afraid of the self-indulgence of sorrow. He left nothing unperformed that he had been wont to do. He visited the schools with even more fidelity than hitherto, he held his neighborhood meetings, he was present at all the committees and various circles, which fill up a parish life. But the moment his tasks were done he flew back to his wife's chamber.

From her childhood his wife had been a member of the church, but, now that she was so soon to go forth from all temples made with hands, her husband's deepest anxiety was as to her full preparation for the great change. Not one word had he ever uttered to his congregation of the awful issues of the future, that he did not now feel in her behalf who so long had walked with him to the house of God. Day by day, he held up before her the searching tests by which, since the days of Jonathan Edwards, the more earnest New-England Christians have tried themselves.

It would have been a great relief to his soul, if, instead of a gentle, languid submission to the will of God, she had been favored with more earnest experiences. Her views of her own sinfulness were correct, but without great strength. Her faith was mild, but not strong. She was willing to go, but did not rejoice. She could not say, for a long time, that she was willing to leave her husband. Still more trying was it that she had to confess, that she loved her husband more than anything else. Her soul had as yet no wings, but would cling and brood in its nest.

Her husband was jealous for the honor of his Master, and sincerely mourned that his beloved clung to *him* with such utter and undivided love.

Agate Bissell, who had lived in the house ever since Mrs. Buell ceased to leave her room, though profoundly sympathizing with the minister in his religious views, yet had a sympathy with a woman's nature, which enabled her to help both of them.

"Why do you worry the poor child, doctor? She can't give you up while the Lord keeps you both together! Seems to me it will be time enough to let go of you when the Lord takes off her hand. As long as we are living God will give us living grace, and he won't give us dying grace till it's time to die. What's the use of trying to feel like dying when you aint dying—nor anywhere near it? It seems to me that folks that are afraid of not following the Lord, might sometimes be afraid of going before him when not called."

Dr. Buell made no reply. He looked upon Agate with a thoughtful, wondering look, as if grateful for unexpected help. At length he said, as if hoping help in other points:

"I have prayed that the Lord would make to her a fuller disclosure of his glory, and that he would give her such an assurance of her acceptance, as would leave us a comforting evidence afterwards."

"You want your wife to be submissive to God's will. Are *you* submissive? Are you willing that God shall show his sovereignty by giving just such a dying experience to this poor child as he pleases? She's been all her life clasping round you, tight as a vine, and she's grown so. Now you want her to unclasp and let go, just when she's so weak and trembling that she needs more than ever she did the support of leaning on and loving you. You are in danger of oppressing one of God's little ones, by putting the burdens of the strong upon her. And as for her evidences, I don't know why a whole life of consistent piety should be thrown away, while you are groping for *feelings* in a poor, feeble, dying creature, that is too weak to manage her thoughts or feelings."

Dr. Buell was used to Agate Bissell's straightforward sense, and now he was more than willing to take the implied rebuke contained in her words. Indeed, his solicitude, his fear of not being faithful, his anxiety that nothing should be left undone in this last great experience of life—departure from it—had somewhat disturbed that nice judgment which he manifested in ministering to others in their last sicknesses.

It was past the middle of February, and so near to March that already its searching winds were abroad, that the crisis of Mrs. Buell's disease was reached. On a Sunday morning, brilliant but blustering, Dr. Buell proceeded as usual to the church. His wife had not for a long time seemed so well. She lay propped up with pillows. Her wan and wasted face was refreshed this morning with a return of almost childlike beauty. Flowers brought by Rose Wentworth stood near. At her husband's appearance, a very sweet smile went over her face, and, as he stooped to kiss her, she whispered: "The Lord is very good. He sends me great peace to-day. Good-bye! Come back again soon, dear husband!"

It was the Angel of Peace, whose wings were already bearing her up above all storms or sorrows!

Dr. Buell was gone scarce half an hour before the sufferer groaned with pain. For a few moments she seemed in anguish. Suddenly she placed her hands on her bosom as if something had given way. The experience of pain faded out of her face—a sweet smile came. She seemed as if she was gazing at some surprising sight. Agate spake to her—spake again. It was vain! Other sounds were now about her, and her voice was heard in other realms!

Rose was sent to call Dr. Buell. He was in the closing passages of his sermon when he saw the door of the church open and Rose enter. She cast upon him a beseeching look, and, then, as if hesitating, she turned and whispered to one who sat near. They both went out into the vestibule.

Though agitated, his sense of duty in God's house inspired Dr. Buell to finish the morning services in every particular. It was not meet that his private feelings should disturb the services of the sanctuary!

No sooner had he come forth than Rose met him. Without waiting for her message, he said:

"Let us hasten! Is she worse?"

"No;—better!"

"Is it so? God help me!"

Bewildered and hardly conscious of surrounding things, he entered the room where his wife lay. He gazed long upon her. Then, in a wandering way, he stretched out his arms and called her, "Eliza! Eliza!" He sat down upon the side of her bed. He placed his hands upon her face. He took her poor little hand in his. There was the wedding-ring, and no other had she ever worn! All the past seemed to come back upon him.

"Dead? Impossible!—Eliza! speak! just one word! Speak! Oh, my wife!"

Then with all the fond names which he had ever used he plead with her.

Agate and Rose withdrew—let us draw back! This first sorrow is for the soul's self only, and for God!

CHAPTER XXXI.

THE TWO SEXTONS.

"Good morning, Mr. Turfmould," said Tommy Taft. "Fine weather. Very busy you were yesterday!—a solemn day."

"Yes, Mr. Taft, a fine funeral—as fine a funeral as ever I see. Such lessons must have an effect on the careless and worldly."

"You must be a judge of sech matters, by this time, Turfmould!"

"I've been in my business nigh about thirty year. I've done most of the respectable buryin' hereabouts, and though I say it that shouldn't say it, I've as good a judgment about a funeral as the next man!"

"I thought the hull country had turned out. I never saw so many folks in that church. There must have been fifty carriages."

"Fifty? nearer a hundred! Then there was six ministers from out of town, besides all that lives here. Gener'ly a funeral in the week time is like a shadow in one spot. But yesterday it was a cloudy day all over town. Indeed, it was just like Sunday."

"Only a good deal more so."

"Yes—a good deal more so. It was certainly edifyin'."

"Ah!" said Tommy Taft, with a look of great simplicity, "the ministers were all very well, but folks couldn't keep their eyes off from you and that beautiful coffin."

"A better coffin was never brought into town. Poor thing! I knew her taste. She was awful neat. The last thing afore they put the linin' in I went myself and stood the coffin on end, and brushed it out, every crack and corner, just as she would have done herself, poor sufferin' creature, if she had been there. But she was a kind thing—very good to folks in distress, and I felt like suitin' her if I could. I just said to myself, 'Turfmould, this is the last time you can pay her back anything for all she did for your child, poor thing!

"I tell yer, Mr. Taft, I never quite liked the way that funeral was served on my child! Tompkins hasn't got the feelin's that our profession requires. Do you s'pose I would take advantage of *him*, if he'd had a body in his house, and one of his own bodies, too, a child, or a wife, or somethin' like that? That's no time to run a fellow, when he's doin' his own mournin'. Nobody loves his child any better'n I did mine. And there wasn't a puttier girl in this town, that was allowed on all hands. Yes, sir. They used to call her the lily of the grave-yard—they did. That was a delicate allusion to my bizness, you know. I hadn't expected that she'd drop off. When I got back from Squire Cheney's funeral, and was puttin' up my hoss, Pete he came out, and looked at me a kind of wet and wild-like, and so I run past him, and went in. Oh, dear me! I don't like to tell about it. My wife she didn't say anything, and I didn't say anything, and Rhoda didn't say anything. She lay on the bed, and her hair hung down on the pillow, and her face was white—and her mother never cried, and couldn't; she didn't look at me, nor at the poor child, neither, and didn't stir; and I never saw two folks look so much alike as they two did; and both of 'em, you know, was called Rhoda! I never was in such a peck of troubles. I thought I'd go for the minister, and then I thought of Dr. Wentworth, and just then who should open the door but the Doctor's Rose. She'd been comin' every day, and fetchin' things, and she loved Rhoda dearly. The child just worshipped Rose. Well, she came in and had some flowers, and she walked straight up to the bed, and said, 'Rhoda, Rhoda,' and then she sort o' came to the meanin' of things; and she looked with her great blue eyes at the poor dead thing, with such a lovin' way, that I ra'ly thought the child's face was gittin' brighter; and once I thought she was comin' to; her face trembled like; but it was just my eyesight,—you know when tears are movin' round you can't see very correct."

At this he wiped his eyes with the back of his hand; and drawing a large red handkerchief from his pocket, he gave a sonorous blowing, sounding, as Tommy Taft said, like the rams' horns around Jericho.

"Well, I was sittin' on the foot of the bed, tryin' to git over it, when the door opened agin, and Rhoda's mother came in—that is my Rhoda—my wife, you know,—and walked right up to the mother. And afore she had time to say a word, Rhoda she riz right up, and gave such a scream as never was heard afore, I do believe. It cum from the very heart. Oh, Lord, how it hurt me! 'Rhody, Rhody,' sez I, 'don't for pity sakes!' But I didn't need to say so, for that's the last time she ever opened her mouth. I don't wonder. There was a year's feelin' in that one scream, and it killed her. She sort o' fell in her mother's arms, and Rose and she got her on the bed, and she lay sleepin' like through the night, and in the mornin' when the sun rose she was gone, and nobody knew when she breathed her last. And then I had two bodies in the house at a time. Providence don't often provide such materials for a funeral. Well, I found it putty hard. Rose, she sent for Alice Cathcart, and they wouldn't let anybody touch her but themselves; and Rose, she put flowers 'round her, and said she was the sweetest flower of 'em all; and Rose kept smilin' and cryin' softly all the time,—and was as gentle, and lovin', and careful of me as if I'd been her father; and she cum to me when I sat in the door, next day, feelin' as if I was dead inside and couldn't feel, only my head it went on thinkin',—she cum and read the Bible to me. At first I couldn't hear much, only her voice was sweet and comfortin'; but as she went on, I seemed to cum to myself just as she was readin', '*And Jesus said, suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of Heaven. And he took them up in his arms, and put his hands upon them, and blessed them.*' It seemed as if I [illegible] somebody say this in the air; and I felt as if I knew what had become of Rhody, and her mother, too—for she warn't more'n a child herself—and I bust into tears, and didn't feel as bad agin through the hull of it. Well, at first I thought I should send down to Springfield for a funeral. Tompkins hadn't done the right thing by me, and though we never had any words, we'd had more'n enough feelin's. He had a smooth way of edgin' into my custom. When young Brace was buried, everybody said I ought to have had it.

"And then he hadn't no family of his own, and there wasn't no chance for me sometime, in like circumstances, you know. Well, this is the way I got out of it: I'd been sittin' still after Rose left off readin', and I heard somebody talkin' in the room where Rhody was—both of 'em—and I went to the door, and there was Rose and Alice kneelin' down by the pillow, and Rose was prayin'. Such a sweet prayer I never did hear. It beat the minister all to nothin', and it was full of thanks, and as happy as a Spring bird is when he sets in the apple trees yonder and sings; and when she stopped I went back and sot down, and all my feelins was changed, and I said: 'Git thee behind me, Satan. Tompkins *shall* have this funeral;' and so he did. I'll say this for him, that I believe he tried to do about right. But nature is strong, you know, and I *did* think he took on a leetle more than he need to. Mebby, if it had been me, I should have done so too. It makes a difference, you know, whose house a funeral's in. And when we was all in the carriages, and the two coffins was in the hearse,—he wanted two hearses, but that would not be in good taste. I didn't like so much show, and besides, I knew the mother ought to keep her child close to her;—and when the procession was ready, he came walkin' up to see, for the last time, if all was right, it wa'n't in human nature to keep in his satisfaction with the occasion! And when he mounted and sat down with the driver on the leadin' carriage, I do believe there wasn't so proud a man in this town.

"Well, he was very kind though, and we've never had any words since then; and, considerin' the temptations of the business, we are pretty good friends; and so I thought it fair, when the minister's wife was goin' to be buried, to show him some attention, so I asked him to officiate with me. Every body knew that it was *my* funeral, and it looked right to let folks see that there wasn't no jealousy. I think such a great loss ought to produce a solemnizing effect on everybody, particularly the young. I always try to make my funerals means of grace to somebody. Every body's got to die. Nobody dies but once, though, and any good you're goin' to git out of 'em you must git then. So I thought I ought to ask Dr. Buell if he had anything specially improvin' to suggest. But he turned as pale as ashes when he saw me, and shuddered all over as if he had a chill comin' on, and Agate Bissell, she said, in a hurry like, as she pushed me out, that he wa'n't in a state of mind to see me.

"But I went over to Tompkins, and he and I consulted about it.

"'Tompkins,' says I, 'this is a peculiar occasion.'

"'Yes,' says he, 'it is. It's enough to make one's reputation.'

"'Now I want,' says I, 'to have just such a funeral as would suit her, so that if she could come back, she'd say, "I thank you, Mr. Turfmould; you have done exactly to my mind." You know that if there was a woman in this town who hated dirt, she's that woman, and I think we're bound to respect her taste when she's gone just as much as if she's livin'.'

"'Well, that's easy enough,' said Tompkins. 'We can slick up everything with extra care, and have a double inspection of all the materials——'

"'Well, that of course; but I was thinkin' about the grave. You know you can't dig a grave and have no dirt. Deceive ourselves as we will, you know we've all got to come to it,—dust we are and to dust we return; but then, you know, we can break the matter gently like, keep a large tarpaulin lyin' over the dirt, and then I mean to cover the outside box with *turf*, which keeps the gravel and stuff from rattlin' in when the coffin is down.'

"'That's a good idea,' sez he, 'and I think all your arrangements are good. They are new, and ought to be fashionable.'

"'I don't care for fashion,' says I. 'I think it will be comfortin' to the minister and respectful to her memory. I've seen things managed quite the contrary. You know when Bidwell's wife died, they put him in the coach with his sister-in-law, and they had always quarrelled, and they didn't mend matters that journey. Old Bidwell told me of it. Says he, 'If I ever have another funeral you shall have it, Turfmould. Jones is no sort of a manager. He just spoilt my wife's whole funeral. I never took a bit of comfort in it from beginning to end.'

"'But Dr. Buell had no reason to say that,' says Tompkins. 'I am sure we did every thing that we could. I think Kyle beat himself with those flowers. I never saw such splendid funeral flowers. I didn't know what flowers was made for till I saw wreaths, and crosses, and dishes. Flowers is certainly very useful, and, if well managed, considerable profit may come from them.'"

For some reason Tommy Taft seemed to enjoy this exhibition of professional feeling with the utmost inward satisfaction. He let the sexton go on uninterrupted, except a word here and there to set him forward again.

"Well, Mr. Turfmould," said Tommy, at length, "it's a serious loss to the town, but that's nothin' to what 'tis to Dr. Buell. I really pity him. There's no mistake the minister feels it. He acts as though he'd lost somethin', and didn't exactly know where to look for it."

[TO BE CONTINUED IN OUR NEXT.]

THE STEPMOTHER'S REPENTANCE.

BY CAROLINE CONRAD.

"Ah! Audree, my darling, I'm a happy man to-night."

Standing in the shadow of the tossing maples, with the sweetbrier scent floating in the dreamy air, Lashley Hall stooped to look in the little drooping face that was trying to hide itself against his arm. Audree Verne stole a starry, swiftly retiring glance at him, and hid her face again.

It would have been difficult to find a lovelier creature than Audree was, with her shining eyes, her soft clinging curls, and lithe young grace; and so timid, that her lover must have had to coax long and listen hard to get his "yes" from her bashful red lips. But he had got it somehow, or Audree would not have been blushing so delightfully and letting her shy fingers nestle like birds in the warm clasp of his hand.

"And now we must go and tell Christina," he said, gently drawing Audree toward the house. "I wonder if it will surprise her much."

Audree shrank a little.

"I used to think you loved Christina, Lashley."

"And so I do but not as I love you, little pet. Christina is my sister; you are my darling."

"But do sisters blush when a brother's name is suddenly mentioned, or when they talk of him? I have seen Christina look at you with those great black eyes of hers. I am sure, Lashley—I mean—I am afraid——"

"Well, you needn't be puss," Lashley said, with a laugh. "Christina and I have been brought up together, just like brother and sister. There is no danger of her feeling any deeper interest in such a scapegrace as I am. She knows me too well, ha! ha!"

Audree felt instinctively that she was right in her conjecture about Christina, but she let him draw her bashfully in through the trellised doorway, to a quiet, pleasant room, in which a young girl sat looking at the opposite walls, dreamily forgetful of the open book upon her knee.

Christina Gilde was taller than Audree, and looked much older—a woman of stately and somewhat majestic presence—handsome, with brilliant black eyes, and black hair plaited in heavy braids about her head.

She turned as the two came in, and her scarlet lips parted to speak; but there was that in the look of both that arrested the words and made her catch her breath involuntarily. Lashley came forward at once, hurrying Audree, who beheld in that handsome, whitening face the confirmation of her conjecture, and shrank accordingly.

"Congratulate me, sister Christina," Lashley said, "Audree has promised to be my wife."

Christina Gilde was a proud woman—prouder than most—but she had never suspected this which had been going on right under her eyes. She felt so sure that Lashley loved her. The fear that he might love that little yellow-haired Audree, that pretty, childish, baby-faced maiden, had never entered her mind. She was a proud woman, but the shock of this was too sudden for even her power of self-control.

"Audree—Audree—your wife, Lashley!" she stammered, blankly, tried to rise from her chair and dropped down beside it, a white heap.

"I told you so, oh, Lashley!" sobbed Audree, flinging herself upon her knees and chafing the cold hands of Christina in her own.

"Tush!" Lashley said; "the room is frightfully warm, and we startled her coming in so suddenly."

He threw wide the sash as he spoke, and the night air streamed in.

Christina roused as it swept over her face, her black eyes opened, and dwelt in a long look upon Audree's face. They seemed to say, though her lips did not move:

"I hate you for this, Audree Verne; he would have loved me but for you, and I hate you."

At any rate, Audree, timid child, shrank from her look as though it had said that, and dropped the cold hand she was holding between her own.

Lashley came from the window, saying:

"My dear sister, are you ill?"

Christina's eyes rested an instant upon *his* face wonderingly. Could he be so unconscious, as he pretended to be, of the state of her heart? Then he should stay so; and rising without aid—she would not suffer him to assist her—she remarked that she *was* ill, and left the room.

Christina and Audree had been school friends, and up to this moment a strong attachment had existed between them. Christina was a woman of few affections. Orphaned young, her father at his death had bequeathed her to the guardianship of Lashley Hall's father, and she and Lashley had grown up like brother and sister together. Lashley had entertained no warmer affection for her than a brother's; but Christina, having so few to love, had early learned to love her adopted brother far beyond sisterly limits, and this feeling had been encouraged in her by the elder Hall, who would have liked nothing better than to have seen his son her husband, and had suffered the desire to become evident to her. Lashley, to do him justice, had no suspicion of the state of Christina's heart, and upon the one occasion on which his father had alluded to the subject of marriage, had dismissed it in a manner that decided him to say no more about it for the present.

Then Audree Verne came, and Lashley's heart capitulated at once. He was of too generous and modest a nature to believe, even when Christina fainted, at so peculiar a moment, that the discovery of his love for Audree had anything to do with it. He persisted in believing that, as she said, she was ill merely, and when Christina made her appearance the following morning, pale, but smiling, and seemingly happy, he looked at Audree triumphantly.

Christina's beauty was of that sort to last, and years but matured it. She did not marry, however. She would not marry without love, and she had loved Lashley too entirely to look with kindness upon another.

During all these years two passions had been moulding her nature—Love and Hate. She was not a bad woman. She would have been as good, perhaps better than most, if it had not been for the hatred that warred within her. She never went to visit Lashley and Audree, and she contrived to be usually absent when they came to the old place.

Finally, Audree died, and when she had been dead a year, Lashley came home, bringing his only child, a lovely little girl of eight, the counterpart of her mother, and named also Audree.

He found Christina a woman of queenly beauty and rare fascinations, and though he had truly loved the dead Audree, he learned to love this liquid-eyed, raven-tressed Christina with a passionate devotedness that was as unlike his love for Audree as the sun's blaze is like the moon's mild ray. His heart would leap at the sound of her light footfall, or the murmur of her silver-cadenced tones. When she looked at him he seemed to see heaven in her eyes, and when he tried to tell her how he loved her, his voice grew husky with emotion and misgiving, and the words died away in his throat.

Christina had no suitors. She was no coquette, and encouraged no attentions from gentlemen to a degree to make even Lashley jealous. He knew he had no rivals, but what reason had he to think that this incomparable woman cared more for him than the rest? He confessed to himself none, and remained silent.

But one day he had fallen asleep in a window seat, and dreaming, as usual now, of Christina, he thought she came and kissed him. The fancy seemed so real, so apparent to his sense, that it waked him, and even then, when wide awake, he felt still a strong thrilling and joy, and the tenderness of soft lips seemed to linger upon his forehead.

As he stirred, there was a low rustle near him, and, starting up, he saw Christina! Her eyes were downcast, her cheeks scarlet with confusion, but she was still too proud to flee where flight would have told as much as staying did.

In an instant he was at her feet, and the story of his love was told, with a fervency of utterance, an earnestness of pleading, that might have won a more obdurate heart than hers to listen to him.

Christina loved him, and she did not keep him in doubt of that long. She put her white, firm hands in his, frankly, at once, though she could not look at him for the sweet shame that was making her glad.

They were married; but instead of returning to the home in which he and Audree had lived, Lashley, at the desire of her whose wishes were now his law, remained at the old place.

Christina had property of her own, and Lashley was rich. They rebuilt and improved, and made their home, outwardly, all that heart could desire. They seemed to all who knew them to lack for nothing that could make life desirable, and were the envy of most.

There was a shadow, however, within their beautiful home, a discordant presence growing, brooding upon the hearth-stone. The little Audree was her father's darling, his pet, his delight, and pride; and Christina, who saw in her only her mother whom she had hated so, detested the child equally with her who was dead. She grudged every caress her husband bestowed upon her. She was jealous of his love for her. She would have had him never speak to the child if she could; and she herself was far oftener harsh to her than otherwise, and made her feel her dislike of her constantly.

Audree was a very lovely child, and possessed a disposition of the most engaging sweetness, so that every body who saw her loved her, save her beautiful step-mother. Audree, who was as sensitive as she was lovely, would shrink like a shadow from *her* presence, and feared her with a terror that was pitiful to see. But it was rarely that she put her terror in words, and when Lashley had been long conscious of the state of affairs, Audree and he had never exchanged a word upon the subject. It was enough for him to see his darling's large soft eyes fill with tears, and her patient lip quiver in spite of all effort to control herself; and when she sobbed sometimes in his arms, without giving any reason, his indignation grew, and more than once Christina and he came to words of unpleasantness on the subject. Each scene of that sort Christina accused Audree of causing, and treated her more coldly than ever.

Lashley, at this, redoubling his efforts to make his pet happy, seemed so completely lost in her love that his wife concluded that he had never cared for her—that he had no heart save for Audree's child; and, in a passion of anger, she told him so. He replied with some heat, reproaching her; and the result was that, when he was suddenly summoned from home upon important business concerns, the two parted, for the first time in their lives, coldly.

When he went, he expected to return the same week, but an unexpected complication arising in the matter he had gone to look after, it became necessary that some one should go West in search of certain important evidence bearing directly upon this complication. It was not necessary for Lashley to go, but, in his perplexed and unhappy state of mind, he decided to make the journey as a diversion and rest from his pain. Perhaps he should be able to look more wisely at his domestic troubles after a few weeks' reflection, and absence from them and having, when he left home, brought Audree with him and placed her for the time among friends whom she seemed happy with, he felt enough at ease with regard to her to make the journey.

He wrote Christina a long and gravely affectionate letter, expressing a hope that both might be able to see their way more clearly before they met again. But Christina, already angered at his taking Audree with him from home instead of herself, and supposing her to be the companion of his journey, was angrier than before, and made no reply to the letter.

Audree was enjoying her stay in the city very much when, one day, a gentleman who had called remarked that he had just come from Holyoke, where Audree's home was; and, unconscious of either her presence or the relationship, he added, that she heard, while there, that Mrs. Hall lay very ill with small-pox, and that such was the panic created by her illness and the appearance of so terrible a disease in their midst, that it was impossible to procure any competent and reliable nurse to attend upon her. The servants, it was said, had all quitted the house, and the proud and queenly Christina was likely to be left to die alone, or nearly so.

Audree, sitting in the farther part of the room, listened with all her might after the first, and heard all. Nobody saw her then as she crept out of the room with a very white little face, and murmured to herself: "I wish I knew what I ought to do. I am sure papa would say I ought to go—papa wouldn't blame me, I know, and—and"—she stifled a little sob—"they wouldn't let me go, I know. I am glad now that papa left me some money when he went away."

Audree was twelve years old by this time and intelligent beyond her years, besides possessing a quaint little wisdom of her own that was as reliable as it was curious.

When Doctor May called sometime the next day upon his patient, Mrs. Hall, grumbling as he went at the cowardice of her neighbors, a little form rose up, doll-like, from beside the couch, and said, quietly:

"I thought you were never coming, Doctor."

Doctor May turned white as though he had seen a ghost, and then he seized her, and, running out of the house, set her down breathless in the garden, with—

"Don't you let me catch you inside that house again, Miss Audree."

She looked a little frightened, and pretended to mind him when he told her to go away to the village; but the instant he entered the house she crept back and hid till he was gone, and next morning he found her there again, assisting the awkward and incompetent nurse, whose services had been the only ones he could obtain for Mrs. Hall.

He could not so easily lay hands upon her this time. She eluded him like a fairy, and to his persuasions, threats, scolding, coaxing, replied that she had come back on purpose to take care of "mamma," and he need not say one word against her doing so. She had been vaccinated thoroughly, and he knew there could be no danger, and he knew, too, that the nurse would do much better if she were by, &c.

In vain he grumbled that it was outrageous nonsense, and nothing else, for a child like her to stay there; that it could not be; she would never live to see her papa again if she stayed; and her papa would never forgive him for letting her be there.

Audree said she was twelve years old, and not a bit afraid of dying. God could take care of her there as well as anywhere, and papa would say she had done right when he came to know.

Dr. May went away then, but he stole back upon her after a while, and, making her a captive again, set out to take her home with him.

Audree submitted at first, but half way to the village, she made the kind-hearted old doctor stop and listen to her while she reasoned in her simple fashion with him. It was a wise little Audree that talked to him. There is no wisdom purer than that from the guileless heart of a child, and as she talked, her sweet face looked to Doctor May like that of an angel.

Doctor May was an old family friend—the only one indeed who had suspected the unhappiness which had grown up between Lashley Hall and his wife. In his agony of dismay and pain, Lashley had one day told him all; but none of them had thought that Audree understood so keenly how matters were as she proved now that she did.

"You know, Doctor May," she said, gently, "that there is scarcely any danger of my taking the disease that mamma is ill of, and if I should, I don't think papa would miss me as much as *her*. He may have other children, but he would never find another like mamma; and then, if God *should* grant to a little girl like me to do anything toward saving *her* life, I—I think, perhaps, mamma Christina would love me at last, and papa would be happy then, and so should we all."

Doctor May wiped his eyes furtively; and, perhaps, knowing of old that Audree could occasionally have a very firm mind of her own, and perhaps for other reasons, walked her back to the sick bed and left her there.

When the neighborhood became aware of what was going on, Dr. May came in for plenty of blame; and of course nobody thought that a delicate child like Audree would ever live through such an experience as that. But Dr. May told them to mind their business; Audree was stronger than she looked; she fed on meat that they knew not of, etc. The Lord's own angels would take care of her.

And so they did; but the doctor and the nurse were their agents. Little Audree was the object of unceasing surveillance on the part of both nurse and physician. The nurse seemed to almost reverence the child as something holy, and watched the young hands, anticipated the young feet in every possible way, and listened to her slightest word as though it had been an oracle. There is no doubt that Audree's deftness, assisted by the nurse's strength, her loving electrifying the nurse's indifference, gave Christina such nursing as she would not otherwise have had, and probably did much toward saving her life.

For she lived,—waked slowly from delirious unconsciousness to sanity and a knowledge that her queenly beauty was all gone, herself a miserable wreck.

She watched Audree through those slow days of convalescence in a kind of maze, asking now and then a question, and dropping into sad silence again.

Had she been there long? Almost since she was taken. Then she hadn't accompanied her father West? No, she had stayed in the city till she heard mamma was ill. And did she come home for that? Yes.

Christina shut her eyes, and slow tears forced their way through her scarred eyelids. She knew already, from the doctor and nurse, of Audree's devotion and untiring attendance upon her, and presently she called the child to her.

"Why did you come to take care of me, Audree?" she asked. "You can't love me, child; what did you care whether I lived or died?"

"I do love you, mamma, if you will let me. I didn't want you to die; I wanted you to get well and love Audree."

Christina's proud face quivered in every feature.

"But you may have taken my disease, Audree, and you may die. Did you think of that?"

"Yes, I thought; but papa would have *you*, and that would be better than to have *me*, if he couldn't have but one, and I should go to mamma."

Christina broke down at that completely, sobbing in an anguish that frightened the child, who shrank back, as was her old custom; but Christina reached and drew her into her arms, saying, solemnly:

"God do by me as I by you, Audree, hereafter. If God will graciously spare us both, you will never miss your own mamma again, so far as a fallible creature like me can fill her place to you."

Lashley Hall had been written to at the beginning of Christina's illness, but the letter had been unable to find him in his wanderings, and consequently he came home, knowing nothing of her illness till he heard it in the village.

Christina cried out and hid her face when she heard he had come; but Audree brought him right in to her side, and, clasping the frail shadow of his once proud and beautiful wife to him with more than the old tenderness, Lashley said to her:

"It was not for your beauty I loved you, Christina, my own. It was for the nobleness of soul and trueness of heart, which shine out now beyond price, and make you dearer to me than ever you were in the most royal moment of your beauty."

"Not *mine*, oh Lashley. If there is anything left in me worth loving it is through Audree. Help me to be all I ought and fervently wish to be to her," Christina said, clinging to him, and sobbing in the fullness of her joy and penitence.

—Reject with indignant scorn all self-congratulation of conscious villany, though they be uttered by Richard or Iago.

ONLY A PURPLE RIBBON.

BY N. G. SHEPHERD.

'Tis but a ribbon of the purple hue—
To me the only token
Of one, a maid, 'twixt whom and I
No vow was ever broken;
Yet, while I gaze upon it now,
A passing shade of sadness,
From cheek, and lip, and eye, dispels
All sign of joy and gladness.

No more, alas! its tender touch
Her rosy ear caresses;
As oft, when fluttering in the wind,
It nestled 'mid her tresses.
But in this casket now it lies,
With trinkets, gems, and letters
That link the present and the past
By slender golden fetters.

Although its hue is faded some,
This ribbon that I cherish
Brings back the thought of other days,
Whose memory cannot perish;
And, like the famed magician's wand,
The maid herself discloses,
With azure eye and crimson lip,
And cheeks that shamed the roses.

Alas! how stern are Fate's decrees—
She wedded with another;
The maiden of the past is now
A matron and a mother.
And this poor ribbon that I hold
My lip to-day caresses,
'Tis quite enough to me that once
She wore it with her tresses?

GARNET'S BETROTHAL.

BY MARY KYLE DALLAS.

The first thing that I remember is the pear tree in our garden, under which I sat in the pleasant autumn afternoons, learning to embroider in silks from Mistress Betty. Often, as I sat there, the ripe fruit would drop into the grass close beside me, and Mistress Betty would nod and say:

"See what the fairies have sent you for being so industrious, Miss Garnet."

And I, who had heard stories of fairies, and witches, and gnomes from her since I was old enough to listen to stories, believed that what she said was true, and that something more than wind had shaken the branches.

Then I used to stitch away the faster; and I took as much pleasure in seeing the flowers grow under my needle as any old woman of them all.

I had lived so little among children, so entirely with my widowed mother and her old governess, that I very seldom played as I should at my age. But for all that I was not a sad child, only a quiet one.

When work was put away, and our tea over—that nice, old-fashioned tea, so cosy and so comfortable—I used to slip away from the house and go back to the old pear tree, and look up through its branches at the stars, and wonder what my little husband, far away in the West Indies, amongst great cotton fields, and black negro slaves, and golden orange trees, and sweet magnolias, and all the tropical wonders I had heard of, might be doing at that hour.

Did he see the same stars and the same great silver moon? and did he ever think of little Garnet Grey?

I used to ponder on these things until my mother or Mistress Betty called me in out of the night dew and sent me off to bed.

You wonder what I mean, no doubt, when I speak about my little husband. That had happened to me which never happens to any one out of a novel or a play beside. I was betrothed, and had been from my cradle, to Justine le Mar, a planter's son, who was just three years my senior, and of whom neither my mother nor Mistress Betty ever spoke save as "Garnet's little husband."

The betrothal came about in this wise: Albert le Mar had stepped, without meaning to do so, into the good graces of an old man who otherwise would have made my father his heir. It had never made the two worse friends, and once when they spoke together of the matter, my father said:

"I only care for wealth for my child's sake. If ever I am rich, it will only be that I may not leave her poor."

When he said this Albert le Mar clasped his hand.

"Set your heart at ease, my friend," he said. "My boy will be rich. They are of suitable age, standing and appearance, as far as we can now discern. Let us betroth them, and the property will belong, as it should, to both."

The man who spoke had French blood in his veins, or the thought had never been born, and the man who listened was romantic as a woman. He acquiesced. A regular compact was entered into, signed and sealed, and neither doubted that a wise thing had been done, nor that the babes whose troth they had plighted would so regard it when they reached maturity.

Both were dead now. Justine was an orphan and I had but a mother, but the compact was not forgotten, and I, for one, felt it as binding as the ten commandments. I did not know but that all girls were thus bestowed upon their husbands; and, at my age, I was not troubled with doubts or fears upon the subject.

Once in a long while, I wrote to Justine, and got an answer back. His guardian, an old Frenchman, thought the betrothal all very proper, and directed the letters on the outside to "Miss Garnet Grey." Inside, they began, "My little wife!"

They were printed first in pencil, but before they grew rare with the boy's growth they were written in a handsome hand. After he went to school I only had one in the holidays, and that was formal and prim, as though dictated.

The older I grew the more I learnt of the money troubles at home, and the great West-India property of my betrothed—the more I was taught to think of my marriage in the light of a step from poverty to wealth, and to forget the baby romance under the pear-tree.

The fairy tale which told of the prince and princess who eat sugar-plums and roast-lamb from one dish and, when they died, were buried in one grave, from which a tall tree and a graceful vine sprung up and grew green forever, were quite forgotten, and, with them, my hopes of being like them some day. At seventeen, only the idea of being a well-dressed bride and sharing my husband's fortune, remained; and I even began to fear that, to be quite happy, one's match should be of one's own making. I had seen some Cubans too—dark, swarthy fellows, whose eyes frightened me, and whom, being very dark myself, I did not admire; and I expected to find my betrothed like them when we should meet.

"However," I sighed, as the thought stole into my mind, "I needn't see much of him, and it will be so pleasant to be rich."

It was certainly not pleasant to be poor—that I knew by experience.

One evening the post man brought a letter to our house directed to my mother. When she opened it, she gave a little cry.

"It is from Justine's guardian," she said, and read it eagerly.

When she was through, she tossed it to me.

"Your little husband will be twenty-one in May," she said, "and is coming to see you. What do you say to that, Garnet?"

"That if he *is* a *little* husband, I shan't be pleased," I said. "You remember he is a man now, and I like tall men."

"Oh, the size don't matter," laughed Mistress Betty, "and, tall or short, he is all you can have you know."

"Has *he* written?" said I.

"No," said mother.

"It would have been better manners if he had," I said, and went away to sit under the pear-tree.

There I cried without knowing why. I began to dread the coming of that betrothed.

I sat there crying softly while the moon arose—for we had had our tea, and it was late; and I did not notice any one coming along the road, until a voice called over the palings:

"I beg your pardon—is there some one there?"

Then I looked up and saw a gentleman leaning on the gate.

He was very young and very handsome, fair, too, as any girl. Even in the moonlight I could see the blue of his eyes and the pink flush on his cheeks. It was the kind of face I most admired—my ideal face. Every girl has one. For a moment, surprise kept me still. Then I arose, and went to the gate. He lifted his hat.

"How near is the nearest public house from this place, Madam?" he said. "I am a stranger and know nothing of the neighborhood."

"Two miles, sir," I said. "Take the road to the right, and it will lead you there."

He laughed.

"The difficulty is I can't take any road," he said. "I've been stupid enough to sprain my ancle amongst the stones on the hill yonder. What I am to do I don't know. Is there a horse I can hire, think you?"

"Not here," I said. "We are only women, and have neither horse nor vehicle; but at least come in and sit down, and I will speak to my mother. She may know what to do."

He thanked me, and I opened the gate. But the few steps he took seemed to make the stranger turn faint with pain. I was never one to think, and I acted on impulse, and stretched forth my hand to help him. For just one moment our fingers touched, and never before and never since have I felt just as I felt then. A thrill ran through me—a strange, blissful tremor; and I felt my cheeks flush and my heart beat wildly. It was not like touching a stranger's hand. I felt as though I had known him for years. He sunk upon the bench trying to laugh at his pain and awkwardness, and I ran in to call my mother. She came, and Mistress Betty with her, and the old woman looked at once to the hurt ankle. It was a bad sprain, and certainly the sufferer could not walk much that night. There was nothing for it but to offer him a couch under our roof, and he accepted it with many apologies.

While Mistress Betty made a cup of tea, I went to put the great chamber in order, to take the linen sheets from the lavender and spread over them the great flowered counterpane which was the work of my grandmother, who had stitched at the buds and blossoms for two years together.

I filled a little vase with flowers, and made all neat and pretty, and there he slept that night.

In the morning, thanks to Mistress Betty's ointments and lotions, the ankle was better, and our guest seemed wondrously grateful.

He told us that his name was William Arnold, and was very frank about being poor and only a clerk on a small salary.

I liked that, for I always detested boasting and prevarication. My mother liked it too, and after they had had some talk she called Mistress Betty and me to her and said:

"What do you say to this? Mr. Arnold wants to board with us."

"You are the mistress," said Mistress Betty.

"Will it be a trouble?"

"No; but he's a stranger."

"But you must know there is no harm in him."

"His face proves that."

"Then the boy may come."

So "the boy" came, and for the first time in years our dull house grew gay. As his ankle grew well, he left us in the morning "to attend to his business," he said; but he was always back by sunset. He read to us, sang to us, and talked to us.

I felt young blood in my veins, and shook off my dreamy ways.

The hour of our boarder's coming home was the happiest of the day, and our cosy meal a feast. Often after it we sat under the old pear tree talking in whispers, why neither of us could have told. Soon I used to let him keep my hand. At last he twined his arm about my waist. So Mistress Betty found us.

The look she gave me, the voice in which she told me that my mother wanted me, brought to my mind what I had forgotten too long—the fact of my betrothal. I had no right to sit thus—no right to feel thus. I arose and tried to leave the spot; but he caught my hand and held me.

"Are you troubled because the old lady is angry?" he asked. "Don't mind her—stay here awhile."

"I cannot, I must not," I answered.

"You must," he said; "I have something to tell you—something you must have guessed long ago. Mistress Betty has no right to frown on me, for I love you very fondly and caresses are the language of love. Garnet, if you can like me a little you will make me the happiest man on earth."

They were very simple words, but his look and voice were full of feeling. His blue eyes read mine. His fingers entwined my own. For the first time I knew the truth, and tore them from him sobbing.

"Oh, I have done wrong—very, very wrong. Forgive me—pity me. It was so hard to remember. I am betrothed to another—I have been from a child; I am to be married in May. I had no right to be so happy, so——"

I paused, choked by my sobs; but he twined his arm about me.

"Some one should have told me this," he said. "How could I guess it. But you do not love him, Garnet?"

"I have never seen him," said I.

"And you *do* love me?"

I only sobbed.

"Garnet," he said, "is this man rich?"

"Enormously wealthy," I said.

"And I am very poor. I should do wrong to urge you to cast wealth aside and give you only poverty. Yet I do love you dearly, Garnet."

I stamped my foot upon the ground.

"I hate his money," I cried. "I shall hate him, I know."

"Then you will never marry him?"

"Hush!" I said. "It was a solemn compact signed by our dead fathers."

"A compact no one has the right to make for another," said he. "It does not bind you."

I trembled. I yielded to his arm—my head sunk on his shoulder. Then a step sounded on the path, and my mother stood before us.

"What does this mean?" she asked, in an agitated tone. "Garnet, I am shocked. You know your position. You should never have allowed this. Mr. Arnold, I must request you to leave us and the house at once."

He looked at her with a quiet smile.

"Miss Garnet has told me all," he said. "I know she is betrothed to a rich man, but a poor one loves her, and she loves him a little. Which should be kept, the holy bond or the unholy? The bond of love or of gold?"

My mother trembled.

"The gold is not all," she said. "I would not sell my daughter. But poverty is a trial I have borne all my life, and is hard to bear, and then—a solemn betrothal."

"Yes," he said—"a solemn betrothal," and before her took me to his heart and kissed me. "You cannot separate our hearts," he said. "But I will go if you bid me."

A moment my mother hesitated. Then she stretched forth her hands.

"Heaven forgive me," she said, "if I do wrong. Be happy together, my children," and she blessed us.

I was frightened, but happy. I clung to my lover's arm and hid my face on his shoulder.

"I could never marry him," I said; "but what shall I do when Justine Le Mar comes in the May-time to see me? he must be stopped. You must tell him, William."

"He will not come in May, and he knows already that you have broken your engagement to him and given yourself to me," said my lover.

"He knows! How?" I asked.

Then my true love knelt at my feet.

"Because I am Justine," he said—"Justine le Mar. I came here to see you before you saw me, and the sprained ankle was a ruse to enter your home, and I hid my name that I might win your love as a poor man rather than a rich one. Forgive me, and love me no less because I can take my bird home to a gilded cage now I have caught her."

And I forgave him as we forgive those we love, and in the May-time we were married.

THE COUNTERFEIT BILL.

BY AMY RANDOLPH.

"It is too bad!" sobbed Kitty Eldon, with burning cheeks and a throbbing heart, "it is too bad! and I won't endure it another day—no, not another moment!"

Kitty was a plump, chubby-cheeked damsel, with a profusion of dimples, and large, wistful-looking brown eyes—a girl whose face and physique clearly betokened quick passions and a warm, tropical nature, very evidently in a state of revolt just at the present moment.

"Kitty!" remonstated a matronly personage, who had just entered, and stood with a troubled face watching the busy hands and flushed temples of the girl, "Kitty, you surely are not going away?"

"Yes, I am going away, Aunt Myra," said Kitty, tossing back the chestnut curls with a defiant motion. "I will not spend another night under a roof where my letters are intercepted, and—and——"

"But, my child, your uncle acts solely for your good. Duval Martyn bears no enviable character, and——"

"I will not hear him aspersed!" indignantly interrupted Kitty, tying on her bonnet with nervous fingers. "I shake the dust of your threshold off my feet henceforth. I chose to take my own pathway in the world. I would sooner earn my bread as governess or ladies'-maid than be longer dependent on your cold charity."

"But, Kitty, my darling, consider——"

Kitty Eldon drew herself haughtily away from her aunt's detaining hand, and passed out of the door like a small embodiment of the spirit of defiance.

Out of the door! but, not until she had reached the corner of the street did impulsive Kitty pause to reflect where she was going.

"I wish I knew of some employment agency or intelligence bureau," thought Kitty, with a strange sensation of loneliness. "Or, perhaps, I might buy a newspaper and see something among the advertisements."

This was an idea that seemed feasible, and Kitty drew out her little purse,—ah, how slender it was!—and paused opposite a news-store.

"Can I sit down and read the paper here?" she asked timidly of the tall, spare-visaged female who presided behind the counter, after she had spent her six cents.

"*I* haven't no objections," was the rather ungracious reply, as the woman pushed forward a ricketty three-legged stool; and Kitty sat down, to glance with eager eyes up and down the crowded columns where "Wants" and "Situations" jostle one another in bewildering juxtaposition.

Wanted—A lively and agreeable young person to act in the capacity of confidential friend and companion to a widow in affluent circumstances. Apply to Mrs. L. L., No. — —— street.

The brown, dewy light sparkled into Kitty's eyes as they lighted upon this particular paragraph.

"The very place!" she exclaimed, half aloud; "No. — —— street. That surely cannot be very far off. Oh, if I only might suit her. I am lively, I know, and I would try so hard to be agreeable. At all events, I will lose no time in applying for the situation. Perhaps it is already filled by some candidate more prompt than myself."

Kitty's heart almost stood still at the direful possibility as she hurried along the sun-baked streets toward the street and number indicated in the advertisement.

"Is Mrs. L. L. at home?" was her faltering question.

The servant looked puzzled.

"There was an advertisement," began Kitty, but the woman interrupted her with a look of intelligence.

"Oh, I know—I know,—it's Mrs. Legrande Leslie. Walk in; she will see you presently."

"Mrs. Legrande Leslie"—it was a pretty name, and Kitty felt sure she should like its proprietress.

It was quite an *a la* fashionable rural boudoir into which she was ushered—filled with flowers in huge alabaster vases, and scattered round with yellow satin chairs, tiny tables and statuettes, and ornamental brackets. To be sure, there was a good deal of dust on the carved black-marble mantel, and more newspapers crammed under the piano than Kitty had been taught to consider as exactly neat; but the lady who arose from a low divan and hurried to meet her was very pretty and engaging in her showy mourning, all jet, and bugles, and fluttering black gauze ribbons.

Mrs. Legrande Leslie was a blonde, small, smiling, and very prepossessing, and Kitty felt encouraged by the winning light in the blue eyes, and the languid pressure of the little hand, which had an allowance of at least three rings to every white finger.

"So you would like to be my companion," she said, sweetly, when Kitty had finished her simple tale. "My darling, I know you would suit me. I'm a physiognomist, and I am *sure* we shall love each other dearly; you have such a sweet, innocent face. Pray, pardon me, darling, but I *must* kiss you."

And as her velvety, perfumed lips touched Kitty's cheek, she *felt* that the liquid blue eyes were looking her over with the keenest and most intent regards.

"As for salary," went on Mrs. Leslie, "that's a matter of no consequence whatever. We shall certainly agree on terms, my dearest Kitty,—you'll let me call you Kitty?"

"Certainly," said the "companion."

"And you'll call me Aurilla—how sweet that will be! And——"

She hesitated, and her voice died suddenly away, as a crimson drapery that shielded a door at the further end of the room was abruptly raised, and a tall figure entered—a man's figure. He was advancing into the apartment, but stopped half-way as his eye fell on Kitty.

"I thought you were alone."

"My dear Roderic, don't go," said Mrs. Leslie, recovering her smiling equanimity. "This is my friend, Miss Elden—my confidential companion. Kitty, this is my brother, Mr. Hughes."

Kitty inclined her head, but could not help thinking, in the one hurried glance she cast towards the tall gentleman, that there was no very striking family resemblance, for he was swarthy, with sunken black eyes, and a heavy under-jaw partially covered by black moustaches.

"Have you transacted any business yet this morning?" asked Mr. Hughes, contemplating the sparkle of his ring.

"No—and that reminds me, I really ought to do a little shopping before it gets any warmer. You'll go with me, won't you, Kitty?"

Certainly Kitty would go anywhere with Mrs. Legrande Leslie; was not it appropriate to her position as "companion?"

And so Mrs. Leslie, in a tumbled black tulle bonnet, and a lace shawl pinned awry, preceded Kitty into her elegant little brougham, which rolled as softly along the streets as if its springs were made of velvet.

"Dear me," sighed Mrs. Leslie, glancing over the pockets of a dainty purple porte-monnaie, "I haven't anything smaller than this fifty dollar note. Kitty, would you object to stepping into one of these stores and getting change?"

"Not at all," Kitty said; but nevertheless, in her inmost heart, she wished that Mrs. Leslie had not asked her.

As the brougham drew up in front of one of the marble-fronted emporiums of the great thoroughfare, Kitty stepped out, carrying the bill in her hand.

"Tens and fives, if you please, my dear," called Mrs. Leslie, musically, after her.

Kitty stood at the counter, waiting for the change—three, five, seven minutes slipped away, and still the "tens and fives" were not brought back. She could see the heads of the cashier and two or three clerks close together, as if in deep consultation, and then the young man who had taken up the bank-note returned, looking curiously at Kitty's innocent, expectant face.

"I do not think you are aware that this is a bad bill," he said, gravely, returning it to her.

"Bad!" echoed Kitty.

"Counterfeit."

As she stood staring at him in speechless amazement, he was called away to attend some other customers.

"Surely Mrs. Leslie cannot know it," thought Kitty as she began to retrace her steps.

"Bad!" repeated Mrs. Leslie, scornfully. "What nonsense! It's because they didn't want the trouble of changing it. Kitty, darling!"

"Yes, ma'am."

"Is—is that young man in the door-way behind those shawls the one that refused to take it?"

"Yes."

What a deep shadow the crimson silk linings of the brougham threw over Aurilla Leslie's lovely face, as she drew back behind them.

"There's a large drug-store a step or two further down, Kitty. They are always accommodating at drug stores. Suppose you try there, my dear."

"But——"

"Nonsense, Kitty! I tell you I *know* the bill is good!"

She was deadly pale now, and her full lips quivered as she almost pushed Kitty away from the carriage.

The girl obeyed. Surely it was impossible that Mrs. Leslie could be mistaken. The bald-headed old gentleman behind the drug counter took the bill and scrutinized it closely from behind his gold spectacles. Then he looked suspiciously at Kitty.

"I would like the change in tens and fives, sir, if convenient," said Kitty.

"But it isn't convenient just now, my girl," said a gruff voice behind her, as a stalwart policeman laid his iron grasp on her arm. "You are my prisoner."

Kitty grew pale as death, and uttered a wild scream, as she caught at the counter for support.

"What—what do you mean? There is some mistake!" she gasped.

"Very well acted, my dear; but I guess there isn't any mistake," said the policeman, jocosely, winking at the clerk she had seen at the first store, who stood beside him. "Come along with me, and we'll settle this little matter out of hand."

"Indeed, indeed," pleaded poor Kitty, through her convulsive sobs, "the lady in the carriage—Mrs. Leslie—said it was quite good, or I never should have tried to pass it a second time."

"What lady? Where is she?"

"In a carriage—at the door."

"Where?"

Kitty eagerly hurried out; but, to her infinite horror and dismay, Mrs. Leslie, brougham and all, had vanished as utterly as if they had never existed. In vain she gazed wildly up and down the street, and rubbed her tearful eyes—no trace or vestige of the blonde widow and her carriage remained. Kitty fainted away on the sunshiny pavement, with the coming and going crowds eddying past her, like the troubled currents of some vast, never ceasing stream.

When she returned to the possession of her senses, she was lying on the sofa in a snug little back parlor, with Aunt Myra wetting her temples with some cool, delicious perfume, and Uncle Edmund industriously fanning her.

"It's all right, my dear! it's all right!" began Uncle Edmund, the moment he saw the brown eyes beginning to unclose. "Don't fret, Kittikin! you're going home with us the very minute you're strong enough!"

"Oh, aunt, aunt!" sobbed Kitty, hugging Aunt Myra's plump neck, until the good lady grew purple in the face. "Was it all a horrible dream? Where am I? And how came you here?"

And then Aunt Myra explains, with a good deal of interjectional assistance from Uncle Edmund, that one of Kitty's cards being found in her pocket, led to her friends being sent for; that a little of Uncle Edmund's common-sense explanation to his friend, the magistrate of that particular precinct, had set all the complications straight; and that she was now exonerated from any blame whatever, and free to return with them.

"And first, my dear, Judge Brayne wants a little talk with you about this Mrs.—Mrs.—What's her name?"

So Kitty told the kind and genial judge all she knew.

"I'm afraid your too late," said the judge, as he mechanically jotted down her words in a memorandum-book. "However, we'll make the attempt."

Judge Brayne was right. Neither Mrs. Legrande Leslie, nor her brother, Mr. Roderic Hughes, were to be heard of.

"I'm sorry," said the policeman who returned from this bootless errand; "if I'd caught 'em, I could have broken up the worst counterfeit gang this side of the Pacific!"

And Kitty, trembling at the perils she had so narrowly escaped, resolved never again—no, not for forty lovers!—to leave the home of Uncle Edmund and Aunt Myra.

* * *

—The repentance that is delayed until old age, is but too often a regret for the inability of committing more sins.

WIT AND HUMOR.

"The Devil to Pay."—This phrase, doubtless, originated in a printing-office, on some Saturday night's settlement of wages. "John," says the publisher to the book-keeper, "how stands the cash account?" "Small balance on hand, sir." "Let's see," rejoined the publisher, "how far that will go towards satisfying the hands!" John begins to figure arithmetically; so much due to Potkins, so much to Typus, so much to Grubble, and so on, through a dozen dittos. The publisher stands aghast. "Here is not money enough, by a jugful." "No, sir; and, besides, there is *the devil to pay.*"

The English Parliament enacted in 1770, that "whoever shall impose upon and betray into matrimony any of his Majesty's male subjects by scents, paints, cosmetic washes, artificial teeth, false hair, Spanish wool, iron stays, hoops, high heeled shoes, or bolstered hips," should be prosecuted for witchcraft, and that the marriage should be null and void.

An excellent lady lost her husband—"a good man, to whom she was tenderly attached." A few days after the funeral the sexton brought in his bill. "For digging grave, two dollars." "My gracious," said the widow, "you don't charge two dollars for digging a grave in such a soft spot as that! I would willingly have dug it myself for one dollar?"

A Mexican editor, in commenting upon and justifying the execution of Maximilian, vehemently says: "We have no sympathy—we can have no sympathy for the fate of the tyrant, *as we were among those who suffered death* under his infamous decree, issued when he had his usurping foot upon the neck of the Republic!"

Probably the worst Conundrum ever made.—The Queen of Otaheite having resolved to pair off her right thumb nail only once in three years, why is the year when she performs that function like her crown, sceptre, and other insignia of office? Because it's her *pare-off-her-nail-year* (paraphernalia).

A farm was lately advertised in a newspaper in which all the beauty of the situation, fertility of the soil, and salubrity of the air, were detailed in the richest glow of rural description, and which was further enhanced with this N. B. *There is not an attorney within fifteen miles of the neighborhood.*

An old veteran, who served through the Mexican war, and also the rebellion, says, that of all the solemn hours he ever saw, that occupied in going home one dark night from the widow Bent's, after being told by her daughter Sally that he "needn't come again," was the most solemn.

A father of three sons and five daughters was asked what family he had. The answer was, "I have three sons, and *they each have five sisters.*" "Mercy," replied the interrogator, "sich a family ye maun have."

An Alabama merchant recently sold $10 worth of goods in one day. The Mobile *Tribune* says a committee is to wait on him to see what he is going to do with all that money. They take hard times jauntily down there.

An Equitable Adjustment.—"Dr. —— wants to know if you'll please to pay this bill now?" Old gentleman looks over the items and replies: "Tell Dr. —— I'll pay him for his medicines and *return his visits.*"

One who had espoused an old and ill-tempered wife, but extremely rich, used to say, "Whenever I find my temper giving way I retire to my study and console myself by reading her marriage settlement."

An insurance agent, urging a citizen to get his life insured, said, "Get your life insured for ten thousand dollars, and then if you die next week, the widder's heart will sing with joy."

A Georgia paper boasts that the ores of that State make the best bell-metal in the world. Up this way "tin" is looked upon as the best *belle*-metal.

SELF-LOVE.

Joe hates a hypocrite. It shows
Self-love is not a fault of Joe's.

Money will do almost anything. Philip of Macedon said, "Send an ass laden with gold into a city and all the sentinels will run away."

It has been remarked that the driver of oxen is the man who most assiduously cultivates the sciences of *haw*-ticulture and *gee*-ology.

EPITAPH.

Here lies a lawyer and an honest man;
Heaven works a wonder for us now and then.

The pleasantest husbandry known to man is said to be the destroying of weeds—a widow's weeds, by marrying the widow.

Keep out of bad company, for the chance is that when the devil fires into a flock he will hit somebody.

CURRENT ITEMS.

A young New Jersey lady was deserted by her lover because he saw her "with another young man one day." Whereupon she bought three ounce-vials of laudanum, went to the young man's residence in Jersey City, upbraided him with his desertion, and then swallowed the contents of the three vials before his face. Fortunately, the dose was too large to kill, and the young lady was spared to become the wife of the horrified lover.

A lady living in New Haven recently dreamed that her son, a boy eleven years of age, was drowned. The dream made such a vivid impression on her mind that she would not allow the lad to go with her to a bathing place by boat, whither they were to go the following day, but sent him round by land; and a few hours after his arrival he was actually drowned while bathing in what was supposed to be a perfectly safe place.

The Cashier of the Planters' Bank of Nashville was attacked by three or four ruffians, on the Murfreesboro' pike, only two miles from the city, who dragged him from his buggy, robbed him of his watch, rings, shirt studs and about $15 in money; and then tied him with cords and threw him into the bushes on the roadside, from which he managed to release himself towards night.

A letter from Omaha says that a rough state of morals exists in the country north and west of that town; that in one afternoon three men had been killed and several badly wounded in affrays; and that the inhabitants are said to be considering the propriety of forming vigilance committees, as the law is disregarded and its officers powerless.

A couple of lawyers went out sailing in a small boat, on Harlem river, the other day, and not knowing how to manage the craft it capsized, and the legal luminaries came near being forever quenched in the brine; but a man who *did* know how to make his way on the water fished them out.

R. C. Gridley, of Austin, Nevada, the "hero" of the sack of flour that produced so much for the Sanitary Commission, three or four years ago, is said to be living at Stockton, California, a cripple and in great poverty. At last accounts efforts were making for his substantial relief.

A few days since, a poor woman and her daughter were prostrated by the heat in Buffalo, and inquiry elicited the fact that they had started from the central portion of New York State, with the intention of walking all the way to Idaho, where they had relatives living.

A man having died in Nashville from an overdose of morphine administered to him by his physician, the widow brought an action against the doctor, claiming forty thousand dollars damages, but the jury gave her only two thousand five hundred dollars.

A successful attempt has been made in London to teach blind women to use the sewing-machine, so as to enable them to earn their living. Several of the unfortunates are stated to have acquired great skill in the use of the machine.

A gentleman living in Newtown, L. I., died a few days since with hydrophobia. He was bit in the thumb three months ago; but as the wound healed up he felt no solicitude about it, until he was attacked by the terrible disease.

A short time since a farmer living nine miles from Cleveland, East Tennessee, was killed in his own house in a drunken brawl with a neighbor. His skull was fractured, and a fatal stab in the left breast was inflicted.

A Horrible Discovery.—A St. Louis paper makes the frightful statement that the bodies or skeletons of thirty-three children were lately found while clearing out one of the reservoirs in that city.

A professional beggar at New Orleans recently testified in court that nine out of ten of the blind beggars of that city are humbugs. The same is true of that class in every large city.

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THE TEACHINGS OF CONFUCIUS.

BY JAMES PARTON.

The writings of Confucius, as before observed in these columns, are the Bible of the Chinese. They are even more than that. Every man in China who aspires to the public service, or who receives a liberal education, derives his mental culture chiefly from them, and the candidate for public honors undergoes a strict examination in them. In every city of the empire there is at least one temple dedicated to Confucius, upon the altar of which fruit, wine and flowers are placed, and sweet-smelling gums are burned, while verses are chanted in his honor. Every intelligent person must desire to know something of the works of a man who holds this high place in the affections and in the educational system of one-third of the human race.

His works are five in number. The first treats of what we should call Moral Philosophy; the second contains the History of China, and a statement of its political and religious institutions; the third, called the "Book of Verses," may be styled the psalm and hymn-book of the Chinese; the fourth is the liturgy or prayer-book; the fifth, which is entitled Spring and Autumn, contains the history of the native province of Confucius. It must not be supposed, however, that Confucius claims these works as his own.

"The doctrine," he says, "which I try to teach is only that which our ancestors taught, and which they have transmitted to us. I have added nothing to them, and taken nothing from them. I transmit them in my turn in their original purity. They are unchangeable. Heaven itself is their author. I am, with regard to them, only what a farmer is to the seed which he sows; he casts it on the ground, such as it is; he waters it, and gives it all his pains. That is all that he can do; the rest is not in his power."

Nevertheless, [illegible] by Chinese scholars that Confucius did suppress many extravagances in the ancient writings, and gave to the whole system of Chinese morality and philosophy an original cast.

Confucius does not clearly teach the existence of one Supreme Being, nor does he attempt to explain the origin of things, nor does he teach the immortality of the soul. He says, nevertheless, that there exists a "Supreme Reason," the source of all things, and especially the source of the reason of man. "The holy man," says Confucius, "the wise man, establishes his doctrine in accordance with this 'Supreme Reason;' he has a penetrating, efficacious virtue, by which he puts himself in harmony with it." "The heaven and the earth," he says, "had a beginning; and if that can be said of them, how much more true of man. After there was a heaven and an earth, all material things were formed; male and female appeared, man and woman." In accordance with the traditions of all our race, Confucius says that "man was originally happy and pure, and that through his own fault he lost his happiness and purity." He also teaches that, "by his own endeavors, man can recover his lost happiness and virtue."

The fundamental principle is this: Man has received from Heaven, along with his physical existence, a principle of *moral* life, which it is his duty to cultivate and develop to the utmost, in order to arrive at a perfect conformity to the celestial and divine Reason. *This* is man's business on earth; and the object of Confucius was to aid his countrymen in accomplishing it. "Every man," he says, "knows what is right, or may know it, and the law of rectitude is so binding on us that we ought not to depart from it in a single point, for a single moment, by so much as the thickness of a hair." "The foundation of all good," he repeats a hundred times, "is the virtue of individual men. With this everything begins, and for this every good institution works." Every man who aspires to direct the actions of others should begin, says Confucius, by perfecting *himself*, and it is only in this way that a man can coöperate with the Supreme Reason, and put himself in harmony with the universe. The only men in the world, he says, who know themselves and their duties to their fellow-men, are those in whom virtue is sovereign, and who are constantly seeking it as the sovereign good.

The principal virtues, according to Confucius, are five in number: Humanity, Justice, Order, Sincerity and Integrity; and of these, humanity, the love of our kind, is the first and fundamental one. Humanity is that universal charity and benevolence which is no respecter of persons, but embraces the whole human race. This virtue, he explains, is not opposed to the punishment of the guilty, but permits us to have recourse to war only after having exhausted all the means of conciliation. It includes justice, conformity to the ancient usages, and perfect sincerity and good faith in all our dealings with one another. It is a part of it to respect public opinion; but it does not oblige us to conform to public opinion in everything. "There are cases," he adds, "in which a man must go directly contrary to public opinion; and no one should comply with the customs of his country except so far as they are right." "Man," says Confucius, "is a being made to live in society; but there can be no society without government, no government without subordination, no subordination without superiority; and legitimate superiority can only be derived either from age or merit. The father and mother naturally rule their children; the elder, the younger; and, in the state, those men naturally rule who have a commanding mind, and know how to win the affections of their fellow men." This high prerogative belongs to but few of the human race, and it consists wholly in a superior humanity. "To have more humanity than others is to be *more of a man* than they, and gives one a right to command!" Again and again Confucius says, "humanity is the foundation of all virtue, and is itself the first and noblest of the virtues."

He dwells much upon the loveliness and necessity of perfect sincerity. "It is this alone," he says, "which gives value to our actions and constitutes their merit; without it, that which appears virtue is only hypocrisy; which, however it may shine and dazzle the beholder, is only a transient flame which the breath of the lightest passion instantly extinguishes."

Of all the forms of humanity, the one which Confucius considers most important is filial piety. He calls it "the queen of all the virtues, the source of instruction, the eternal law of Heaven, the justice of the earth, the support of authority, the chief bond of society, and the test of all merit." Man, he assures us, is the noblest being in the universe, and filial piety is the grandest thing in man. It comprehends three great classes of duties: those which we owe to our parents; those which are due to the government; and those which are due to the Supreme Reason. It is as binding upon the emperor as upon the lowest of his subjects. "We owe to our prince," says Confucius, "the love which we have for our mother and the respect we feel for our father, because he is both the father and the mother of his subjects. It is filial piety also which obliges man to honor and serve the celestial power, and this is to be done *by the acquisition of virtue*." "But," says the sage, "however great may be the love and obedience of a son towards his father, or a subject towards his king, it never ought to degenerate into servility; for there is a HIGHER LAW to that of either a father or a king, the law of the Supreme Reason."

"Man," says Confucius, "is a being apart, in whom are united the qualities of all the other beings. He is the universe in miniature, endowed with intelligence and liberty, capable of improvement and social life, he can discern, compare and act for a definite end, and can select the means necessary to arrive at that end. He can perfect himself or deprave himself, according to the good or bad use which he makes of his liberty. He knows what is wrong and what is right; he knows that he has duties to perform toward Heaven, himself and his fellow-man. If he acquits himself of these different duties, he is virtuous, and worthy of reward; if he neglects them, he is guilty, and deserves punishment."

He divides men into four classes with regard to their moral worth.

The first and most numerous class comprehends the great mass of mankind, who are commendable for no particular excellence, who speak only for the sake of speaking, without considering whether they speak well or ill, or whether they ought to speak at all; who act only by instinct and routine; who have an understanding, like other men, but an understanding which does not go beyond the eyes, ears and mouth. These are "the Vulgar."

The second class is composed of those who are instructed in science, in literature and in the arts; who propose to themselves distinct objects, and know the different means by which they can be obtained; who, without having penetrated deeply into things, know enough of them to give instruction to others, and to live a life conformed to the established forms and usages. This class of men he styles "the Educated."

The third class are they who, in their words, their actions, and in the general conduct of their lives never depart from the line of strict rectitude; who do right because it is right; whose passions are subdued; who attach themselves to nothing; who are always the same, both in adversity and prosperity; who speak when they ought to speak, and are silent when they ought to be silent, having firmness enough not to conceal their sentiments when it is proper to utter them, though they should lose thereby their fortunes or their lives; who despise no one, nor prefer themselves to others; who are not content to derive their knowledge from ordinary sources, but push their investigations to the fountain-head, so as to free their knowledge from all mixture of error; not discouraged when they fail, nor proud when they succeed. These are "the Philosophers."

The fourth class consists of men who never depart from the *just medium*—who have fixed rules of conduct and manners from which they never depart; who fulfil with perfect exactness and a constancy always equal the least of their duties; who repress their passions and watch over all their words and acts; who fear neither labor nor pain in bringing back to their duty those who have wandered from it, in instructing the ignorant, and in rendering to all men any services in their power without distinction of poor or rich, expecting no reward, and not even asking the gratitude of those whom they have served. These are "the Virtuous."

The fifth class is composed of the few men who, besides being virtuous, are endowed by nature with extraordinary and beautiful gifts; who are lovely in their persons and manners as in their conduct; who have acquired by long practice the *habit* of fulfilling, without any effort and even with joy, all the duties which nature and morality impose; who bless every creature within their reach, and, like heaven and earth, never discontinue their beneficent labors, but go on in their course imperturbable and unvarying, like the sun and moon. These men, precious but few in number, are "the Perfect."

"Marriage," says Confucius, "is the proper condition of man, and the means by which he fulfils his destiny upon earth. Man is the head—he should command; woman is the subject—she ought to obey. Husband and wife should be like heaven and earth, which concur equally in the production and support of all things. Mutual tenderness, mutual confidence, mutual respect, purity, and propriety should be the base of their conduct." He permits divorce for any one of seven reasons: "when a woman cannot live in peace with her father-in-law or mother-in-law; when she cannot bear children; when she is unfaithful; when, by the utterance of calumnies or indiscreet words, she disturbs the peace of the house; when her husband has for her an unconquerable repugnance; when she is an inveterate scold; when she steals any thing from her husband's house;" in any of these cases her husband may put her away.

"Government," he says, "is only an extension of the paternal authority, and the great object of government is the promotion of that private virtue which is the great source of all happiness and good." "Nowhere," says a Chinese scholar, "are the rights and duties of kings and peoples taught in a manner so elevated and reasonable as in the writings of the Chinese philosopher, who everywhere maintains that the welfare of the people is the Supreme Law."

Toward the close of his life, one of his disciples asked him if there was not some one maxim which would guide a man aright in all circumstances, and which could be regarded as the essence or summary of all morals. The sage said there was, and gave it thus:

"DO TO OTHERS AS YOU WOULD HAVE OTHERS DO TO YOU."

Such are some of the leading ideas and opinions of Confucius. If any one should ask why the Chinese, who have for twenty-four centuries possessed his writings, should be no better than they are, I would reply by asking another question: Why are we no better, who have enjoyed more numerous and purer lights?

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—The twelfth article of the series by the College Presidents, will be published in our next number. It was not received in time for this issue. It is by Rev. Dr. Anderson, President of the Rochester University.

THE FISHERMAN AND THE FLOUNDER;

OR,

THE WOMAN WHO WANTED TO BE POPE.

A GERMAN FAIRY TALE.

BY JOHN G. SAXE.

A fisherman, poor as poor can be,
Who lived in a hovel beside the sea,
Was fishing, one day, when "Lo!" he cries,
"I've caught a flounder of wondrous size!
As fine a flounder as one could wish!"
"O, no! you haven't!" exclaimed the fish;
"In spite of my scaly skin," he said,
I am not a fish, but a Prince instead;
Condemned to suffer this watery woe;
So I beg, good man, you will let me go!"
The fisherman, frightened at what he heard,
Let the flounder go with never a word
Except "Good bye!—I'd rather eschew
Than cook a flounder who talks like you!"
His hovel near the fisherman sought,
And told his wife of the fish he caught,
And how his luck was all in vain,
For he let the flounder off again!
"And did you ask for nothing?—alack!"
The woman cried,—"Go presently back,
And tell the Prince of our wretched lot,
And ask him to give us a finer cot!"
To mind his wife he was something loth,
But he feared the woman when she was wroth,
And so he went to the ocean side,
And thus the fisherman loudly cried:
"O good flounder in the sea,
Hither quickly come to me;
For Pauline, my loving dame,
Wants queer things I fear to name."
Whereat the flounder, swimming near,
Said, "Why, O why, am I summoned here?"
And the trembling fisherman answered thus:
"My dame is always making a fuss;
A cozy hovel is hers and mine,
But she fain would have a cottage fine!"
"Go home," said the fish, "this very minute;
The cottage is hers; you'll find her in it!"
He hied him home in haste, and lo!
The fisherman found it even so,
"How happy," he cried, "we now shall be!"
But the woman answered, "We shall see!"
When a month was past, the woman sighed
For a larger house—"Now go," she cried,
"And tell the flounder ('tis my command)
I want a mansion large and grand!"
To mind the dame he was truly loth,
But he feared the woman when she was wroth;
So he went again to the ocean side,
And loudly thus the fisherman cried:
"O good flounder in the sea,
Hither quickly come to me;
For Pauline, my loving dame,
Wants queer things I fear to name."
Whereat the flounder, swimming near,
Said, "Why again am I summoned here?"
And the trembling fisherman answered thus:
"My wife is always making a fuss;
She deems our cottage much too small;
She wants a mansion large and tall."
"Go home," said the fish—"this very minute;
The mansion is there—you'll find her in it!"
He hied him home in haste, and lo!
The fisherman found it even so!
And he cried, "How happy we shall be!"
But the woman answered, "We shall see!"
When a week was past, the woman sighed
For a castle grand—"Now go," she cried,
And tell the flounder that he must give
Your wife a palace wherein to live."
To mind the dame he was greatly loth,
But he feared the woman when she was wroth;
So he went again to the ocean side,
And softly thus the fisherman cried:
"O good flounder in the sea,
Hither quickly come to me;
For Pauline, my loving dame,
Wants queer things I fear to name!"
Whereat the flounder, swimming near,
Said, "Why again am I summoned here?"
And the trembling fisherman answered thus:
"My dame is always making a fuss;
She deems our mansion poorly planned;
She wants a palace great and grand!"
"Go home," said the fish, "this very minute;
The palace is there—you'll find her in it!"
He hied him home in haste, and lo!
The fisherman found it even so,
And he cried, "How happy we shall be!"
But the woman answered, "We shall see!"
When a day was past, with growing pride,
For regal power the woman sighed;
And she bade the fisherman tell the fish
To reign as a king was now her wish.
To mind the dame he was sadly loth,
But he feared the woman when she was wroth,
So he went again to the ocean side,
And softly thus the fisherman cried:
"O good flounder of the sea
Hither quickly come to me;
For Pauline, my loving dame,
Wants queer things I fear to name."
Whereat the flounder, swimming near,
Said, "Why again am I summoned here?"
And the trembling fisherman answered thus:
"My dame is always making a fuss;
She has got a palace great and grand,
And now she asks for royal command!"
"Go home!" said the fish, "at the palace gate
You'll find her a king in royal state!"
He hied him home in haste, and, lo!
The fisherman found it even so.
"Good faith," said he, "'tis a charming thing
To be, like you, a sovereign king!
With that golden crown upon your brow,
I'm sure you'll be contented now!"
"Not I, indeed," the woman said,
"A triple crown would grace my head;
And I am worthy, I humbly hope,—
Go tell the flounder to make me Pope!"
"A Pope? my dear,—it cannot be done!
The Church, you know, allows but one."
"Nay, none of your nonsense, man," said she,
"A Pope—a Pope I am bound to be!
The Prince will find it an easy thing
To make a pope as to make a king!"
To mind the dame he was sorely loth,
But he feared the woman when she was wroth,
So he went again to the ocean-side,
And thus the fisherman faintly cried:
"O, good flounder in the sea
Hither quickly come to me,
For Pauline, my loving dame,
Wants queer things I fear to name!"
Whereat the flounder, swimming near,
Said, "Why again am I summoned here?"
"Alack, alack!" the fisherman said,
"Whatever has turned the woman's head,
She is ill-content with royal scope,
And now, good luck! she would fain be Pope!"
"Go home!" the flounder gruffly cried,
"And see the end of foolish pride;
You'll find her in her hovel again,
And there, till death, shall she remain!"

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Autobiography of the Hon. Horace Greeley.

SOMETHING FOR FATHERS TO BUY FOR THEIR SONS TO READ.—We shall commence in our next number, the LIFE OF HORACE GREELEY, written by himself, for the *New York Ledger*. Probably no work more instructive to the young, in the formation of character, has ever been published;—at the same time, it will possess all the interest of a novel. The poor boy, rising, by his own exertions, to be the distinguished man, is a theme which cannot fail both to entertain and instruct, especially when the whole story is told with the fascinating charm of simple truth.

THE WOMEN OF 1867.

A woman who wrote used to be considered a sort of monstrosity. At this day it is difficult to find one who does not write, or has not written, or who has not, at least, a strong desire to do so. Gridirons and darning-needles are getting monotonous. A part of their time the women of to-day are content to devote to their consideration when necessary; but you will rarely find one—at least among women who *think*—who do not silently rebel against allowing them a monopoly.

What? you inquire, would you encourage, in the present overcrowded state of the literary market, any more women scribblers? Stop a bit. It does not follow that she should wish or seek to give to the world what she has written. I look around and see innumerable women, to whose barren, loveless life this would be improvement and solace, and I say to them write! Write, if it will make that life brighter, or happier, or less monotonous. Write! it will be a safe outlet for thoughts and feelings that maybe the nearest friend you have has never dreamed had place in your heart and brain. You should have read the letters I have received; you should have talked with the women I have talked with; in short, you should have walked this earth with your eyes open, instead of shut, as far as its women are concerned, to endorse this advice. Nor do I qualify what I have said on account of social position, or age, or even education. It is not *safe* for the women of 1867 to shut down so much that cries out for sympathy and expression, because life is such a maelstrom of business or folly, or both, that those to whom they have bound themselves, body and soul, recognize only the needs of the former. *Let them write* if they will. One of these days, when that diary is found, when the hand that penned it shall be dust, with what amazement and remorse will many a husband, or father, exclaim: I never knew my wife, or my child, till this moment. All these years she has sat by my hearth, and slumbered by my side, and I have been a *stranger* to her. And you sit there, as you read sentence after sentence, and recall the day, and the month, and the week, when she moved calmly, and *you* thought happily, or, at least, *contentedly*, about the house, all the while her heart was aching, when a kind word from *you*, or even a touch of your hand upon her head, as you passed out to business, or pleasure, would have cheered her, oh *so* much! When have you sat down by her side after the day's work for both was over, and talked with her just a few moments on something besides the price of groceries, and the number of shoes Tommy has kicked out, all of which, proper and necessary in their place, need not of necessity form the staple of conversation between a married pair. Had you done this; had you recognized that she had a *soul* as well as yourself, how much sunshine you might have thrown over her colorless life.

"Perhaps, sir," you reply; "but I have left my wife far behind in the region of thought. It would only distress her to do this!" How do you know that? And if it were so, are you *content* to leave her—the mother of your children—so far behind? *Ought* you to do it? Should you not, by raising the self-respect you have well nigh crushed by your indifference and neglect, extend a manly hand to her help? *I* think so. The pink cheeks which first won you may have faded, but remember that it was *in your service*, when you quietly accept the fact that "you have left your wife far behind you in mental improvement." Oh! it is pitiable this growing apart of man and wife, for lack of a little generous consideration and magnanimity! It is pitiable to see a husband without a thought that he might and *should* occasionally have given his wife a lift out of the petty, harrowing details of her woman's life, turn from her, in company, to address his conversation to some woman who, happier than she, has had time and opportunity for mental culture. You do not see, sir—you *will* not see—you do not desire to see how her cheek flushes, and her eye moistens, and her heart sinks like lead as you thus wound her self-respect. You think her "cross and ill-natured," if when, the next morning, you converse with her on the price of butter, she answers you listlessly and with a total want of interest in the treadmill-subject.

I say to such women: Write! Rescue a part of each week at least for reading, and putting down on paper, for your own private benefit, your thoughts and feelings. Not for the *world's* eye, unless you choose, but to lift yourselves out from the dead-level of your lives; to keep off inanition; to lessen the number who are yearly added to our lunatic asylums from the ranks of misappreciated, unhappy womanhood, narrowing by lives made up of details. Fight it! oppose it, for your own sakes and your children's! Do not be *mentally* annihilated by it. It is all very well to sneer at this and raise the old cry of "a woman's sphere being home"—which, by the way, you hear oftenest from men whose home is only a place to feed and sleep in. You might as well say that a man's sphere is his shop or his counting-room. How many of them, think you, would be contented, year in and year out, to eat, drink, and sleep as well as to transact business there, and *never desire* or *take*, at all costs, some let-up from its monotonous grind? How many would like to forego the walk to and from the place of business? forego the opportunities for conversation, which chance thus throws in their way, with other men bent on the same or other errands? have, literally, *no* variety in their lives? Oh, if you could be a woman but one year and try it! A woman—but not necessarily a butterfly—not necessarily a machine, which, once wound up by the marriage-ceremony, is expected to click on with undeviating monotony till Death stops the hands.

FANNY FERN.

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RAGGED CHURCHES.

All men being born equal, there is no moral reason why Dives and Lazarus should not worship side by side. But Dives is pretty much the same exclusive sort of person now that he was in Scripture times, and Lazarus—probably in consequence of the persistent neglect and bad treatment he has received from Dives—is by no means the humble and exemplary person that he used to be. In London he will not attend the magnificent temples of worship in which Dives puts up his prayers. Perhaps he thinks that the Rich Man does not want him there, and possibly he is right; for Wealth in glossy broadcloth is not, as a rule, fond of rubbing shoulders, even at church, with Destitution in threadbare frieze. Be that as it may, certain Christian people in the British metropolis, who have an idea that paupers have souls to be saved, and that the manner of life of that class in England is not conducive to their eternal interests, have, within a few years, established what are called "ragged churches" in various parts of that city. There are fifty-eight of them now in existence, and they are said to be doing a great deal of good. At first the rowdies who frequented them amused themselves during the services with performing the "railroad overture" and singing street ballads, but the preachers opposed unwearied patience and kind remonstrance to these demonstrations, and in the end those who "went to scoff remained to pray." Sound temporal advice is mingled with religious instruction by the shepherds of the ragged flocks, and it is said that many an idle loafer has been converted to industry under their ministrations. Ragged pauperism is not an established national institution in this country as it is in England, and therefore we do not need churches for its especial accommodation; but we *do* require a larger number of free places of worship for the use of those who are too poor to pay pew rent and too proud to visit temples of religion where their presence seems to be considered an intrusion.

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AMERICAN HIGH LIFE.

Americans never make themselves more ridiculous than when they *court* the toadyism which the "privileged classes" abroad haughtily accept as their natural due. Our would-be noblesse do not understand the art of receiving homage with graceful indifference. They crave it and solicit it, and the result is that the sycophants who glorify them show a sad lack of taste and refinement in the manner and matter of their adulation. The idols and the worshippers are well suited to each other, for if the latter apply their flattery with a trowel, the former like it that way best. It is strange, but true, that your republican popinjay can relish a dose of laudation that would make a thorough-bred aristocrat sick, and your republican toady, aware of the fact, governs himself accordingly.

The London Morning Post or Court Journal, in chronicling a marriage in high life, never indulges in such disgusting obsequiousness as characterises the "first-rate notices" of our native "Jenkins" on like occasions. The following extract from an article by that distinguished puff-manufacturer, is a fair sample of his usual style of reporting "tip-top" marriages, or, to speak after the manner of Jenkins, "Nuptials in High Life:"

"Mrs. ———'s dress was a rich, heavy, flowing white silk, while a magnificent vail of Brussels point lace floated over her shoulders. Upon her head *a coronet sat gracefully*, the gift of the Emperor and Empress of France, and a girdle with a diamond clasp encircled her waist. She was the cynosure of all eyes.

"Mr. ———, the bridegroom, was dressed in black, *relieved* by *a waistcoat of snowy whiteness, and a neat white tie. A pleasing smile rested upon his features* as he grasped the hands of the friends who crowded closely around him to offer their congratulations, and all pronounced him a most happy man.

"Invitations had been sent to fifteen hundred persons, and the luxurious parlors were thronged with guests, *many of them from abroad*."

There is another "Jenkins" however, who is a yet more grandiloquent toady than his confrere. Note how *he* describes a wedding:

At four o'clock the private carriages, conveying the wealth and beauty that had been invited, commenced to arrive. As fast as they halted in front of the main gate of the church, attentive police-officers opened the doors, elegantly-attired ladies stepped daintily forth upon *the white muslin that had been spread down to the curb*, tripped lightly up to the broad steps, etc. * * * The ladies all appeared in elegant toilettes; the gentlemen in *fine dress-suits*. The attendance was more remarkable for *selectness* than numerical size. At ten minutes after four, the *grand organ thundered and crashed forth its tones of welcome to the bride*. Instantly there was a flutter of anxious expectation, as hundreds of heads were turned inquiringly toward the main entrance, and all eyes were *fastened fixidly* upon the handsome couple who advanced slowly up the aisle, followed by their relatives. The bride's face could not be seen very distinctly, as she held it low in walking up the aisle. There was a vision, however, of a lovely countenance—of a wealth of white satin and lace, etc. * * * A gentle sigh, perhaps of generous admiration, pervaded the church for a second. * * * The bride walked out with still, downcast head,—*a colored waiting-maid bearing the trail of her dress*.

At a patrician wedding in France or England, the sidewalk carpeting (if any) would have been a rich Brussels or Turkey fabric, and instead of a solitary colored woman "bearing the trail," the bride's *train* would have been borne by a bevy of pages. American imitations of foreign fopperies are absurd enough even when they are perfect, but such pinchbeck caricatures as the one above described are positively disgusting.

◆

Was Cyrus W. Field's Nose Pulled?

This appears to be the great question of the day; but like all other important questions, there are two sides to it; the facts of the case, however, so far as we can learn, are as follows: Mr. Field gave a dinner to the editors connected with the Associated Press. At this dinner a dispute arose between Mr. Jones, the publisher of the *Daily Times*, and Mr. Field. The latter so far violated the proprieties of the occasion and the position of a gentleman as to call Mr. Jones, one of his guests, a liar, whereupon Mr. Jones got up, and left the room. The next day he wrote a note to Mr. Field, demanding an apology. Mr. Field refused to make the apology. The result was that the first time they met, (it happened to be in Broadway,) Mr. Jones walked up to Mr. Field and pulled his nose in that great thoroughfare. But Mr. Field, it appears, claims that his nose was not pulled. He says that he *thinks* it was not touched, although he does not deny that Mr. Jones attempted to pull it. In response to this statement, Mr. Jones declares in the most positive manner that it *was* pulled—that he *knows* it was pulled: and if Mr. Field has any doubts about it, he (Mr. Jones) pledges himself, on the very first opportunity, to remove any remaining uncertainty on the subject. We are inclined, after examining all the testimony, to believe that Mr. Field's nose *was* pulled, for these reasons: In the first place, that Mr. Jones pulled *something* there can be no doubt. The question is, then, *what* did Mr. Jones pull? Was it a nose?—a human nose? If so, the fair inference is that it was Mr. Field's nose. In the second place, if it was not Mr. Field's nose, whose nose was it! His was the nose Mr. Jones was after. A nose, even a pulled nose, as every body knows, must belong to somebody; and nearly every paper in the country will insist upon it that Mr. Field's nose was pulled; even the cable, if the truth were known, must have carried the news (not the nose) across the Atlantic, for, unfortunately—

"There is a lust in man no power can tame
Of loudly publishing his neighbor's shame."

◆

Mr. Beecher's "Pete Sawmille."

LITCHFIELD, Conn., July 20, 1867.

ROBERT BONNER, ESQ.—DEAR SIR:—I have been reading the late numbers of Mr. Beecher's story in this village, (which might very well pass for "Norwood,") and have been forcibly struck with the fidelity to *New England nature*—animate and inanimate—which it displays. There are several characters introduced in the narrative of which I have seen the *counterparts* during my summer sojourn in this State. If I have not made the acquaintance of the debonair negro, Pete Sawmille, who figures conspicuously in the opening chapters, it is not *his* fault, poor fellow, for he was gathered to his fathers years ago. Litchfield was his dwelling place, and he was known by the soubriquet which Mr. Beecher has bestowed on him in his novel. The poesy of New England scenery—and it is full of poesy—was never before so exquisitely described as it is in that delightful work. It is worth while to make a pilgrimage through Connecticut on foot, just to compare the author's descriptions with the thing itself.

J. B.

◆

A Bad Clergyman.

We regret to learn that the Rev. Mr. Merrill, a Methodist clergyman of Plattsburgh, has turned out to be a bad man. His name was some time ago associated in a disreputable way with that of a young lady, and he subsequently ran away and left his wife and his church in order to avoid an investigation. The young lady, it seems, belonged to the class of persons whom another Methodist clergyman, the Rev. Mr. "S. McChesney," of Saratoga, very adroitly designates as "inexperienced." Now we would advise the fathers and mothers of all "inexperienced" young ladies to beware of a certain class of ministers who travel from place to place after the manner of "wolves in sheep's clothing." The Methodist church appears to have been peculiarly unfortunate, in this respect, as several clergymen of that denomination have been connected with cases of scandal recently. But, to the credit of the Methodist church be it said, that no sooner are such scoundrels detected than they are expelled from the ministry. We do not understand, however, why it is that the Methodists are so frequently imposed upon by bad men in the pulpit, unless it be that they themselves, as a people, are so good, so pure-minded, so unsuspecting, and so confiding that they never suspect evil of others, and thus are more easily duped by clerical impostors than other more fashionable, worldly-minded, and ostentatious denominations.

WHAT I SAW TO-NIGHT—JULY 4th.

BY ETHEL LYNN.

I saw such a beautiful thing to-night
  Whilst bursting rockets splashed the sky
And whirling stars flung asteroids
  Hither and thither fitfully.

It was not the whirl of the "Persian Rose,"
  Nor the "pine-tree's" blue and crimson sheen,
Nor circling smoke where throbbing fire
  Flushed violet, and rose, and green.

It was not the legend writ in light,
  Nor emblem true through golden rain—
Not these. 'Twas but a spark of love
  Which put their glory quite to shame.

Surging and selfish swayed the crowd,
  Eager to see these tricks of fire—
People for once looked only up
  Careless of footstep in the mire.

Thus whilst the weak were rudely thrust
  Aside, and might made right to be,
I saw how fair and bright a thing
  Unselfish human love can be.

A woman humble, poor and old,
  In shabby hood and gingham gown,
Stood circled by a son's stout arm,
  Happy as tho' she wore a crown.

What cared she tho' the lady fair
  Rode in a carriage like a throne,
Clad like a queen, she envied not
  The haughty dame who rode alone.

The man was rough and coarsely clad,
  His speech was plain as it could be;
Yet as he bid her fearless stand,
  A goodly sight it seemed to me.

As now and then his glances fell
  Down on the shabby little hood,
So pitiful, so tender too,
  Quick tears within mine eyelids stood.

And thus they waited through the show—
  He ever watchful for her sight,
Whilst she in simple wonder gazed
  At whirling wheel and rockets' flight.

So this was what I saw to-night
  That seemed most beautiful to me—
Strength tried and trusted by the weak,
  Love faithful everlastingly.

WINNING HER WAY.

By MRS. SOUTHWORTH,

AUTHOR OF "BRITOMARTE, THE MAN-HATER," "SELF-MADE," "THE HIDDEN HAND," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER LXX.

THE MISSING BOY.

> Go, when the hunter's hand hath wrung
> From forest caves her shrieking young,
> And calm the lonely lioness;
> But soothe not, mock not, my distress. BYRON.

Anna returned to the drawing-room to face the difficulty of her duty to keep Drusilla ignorant of the real cause of General Lyon's and Richard Hammond's journey to Southampton, and to do this without either telling or acting a falsehood. She wished to put off the evil hour as long as possible, so as to have time to perfect her plan of action, and therefore she kept away from Drusilla's chamber and remained in the drawing-room.

Drusilla's sleep was long and unbroken. It was four o'clock in the afternoon before she joined Anna. She—Drusilla—looked refreshed and blooming.

"You have had a good nap," said Anna.

"Yes," said Drusilla, smiling, as she sat down, but looking all around as if in search of some one.

"You are looking for grandpa and Dick?" said Anna.

"Yes, and for little Lenny and Pina," answered Drusilla.

"Oh, little Lenny is out with his nurse," said Anna, willingly answering the easiest part of the observation first.

"And uncle and Dick are sleeping off their last night's fatigue, I suppose."

"No, poor souls! they are incurring more fatigue," said Anna, smiling, and trying to give a light and playful turn to the conversation.

"Why, where are they gone?" exclaimed Drusilla, raising her brows in surprise.

"On a nice little jaunt to Southampton."

"To Southampton? What is the occasion?"

"Well, you see, one of Dick's good-for-nothing 'friends,' or rather, to speak the exact truth, one of his former good-for-nothing 'friends' has been getting himself into trouble. Of course poor Dick must needs take pity on him, and so my poor fellow and my grandfather have both gone down to Southampton to get *him*—Dick's old friend—out of it."

"Ah! and that was the matter with Dick and uncle this morning at breakfast?"

"Yes. Dick had the subject on his mind, and wished to break it to grandpa, and grandpa saw that he had something to say to him, and was both longing and dreading to hear it; for, to tell the truth, I suppose he was fearing that Dick himself had got into a mess of some sort, and I dare say you were thinking the same thing, Drusilla."

"Well, perhaps I was; for our affections make us fearful for those we love, Anna; and you and Dick are just as dear to me as the dearest brother and sister could possibly be."

"Well, darling, I know that, and your love is not lost on us, you may be sure. But be at ease on our behalf, as it was not Dick but one of his old friends that got into a scrape."

"I am both glad and sorry. I am glad it was not Dick, and sorry that I did him the wrong to think it could have been. But—who was it, then, Anna, if I may ask?"

"Ah! now, my dear, that would be telling. I assure you Dick would not have told grandpa if he could have got along without his assistance; and he would not even have told me, his wife, if he could have helped it. I am sure he would not like to tell any one else. Now you are not offended?"

"Offended? Oh dear, no—certainly not, Anna. Of course I see such delicate difficulties as I suppose this of Dick's friend to be, should be kept secret from all except those immediately concerned in settling them—— I wonder why that girl doesn't bring little Lenny in?" said Drusilla, suddenly changing the subject, and going to the window to look out.

"Yes, it is time she did, indeed. I dare say she will be here with him in a few minutes," answered Anna, very glad to have weathered the storm she had so much dreaded.

"Anna, dear, what time did Pina take little Lenny out?" inquired Drusilla, rather uneasily.

"Immediately before luncheon."

"What time was that to-day?"

"About two o'clock."

"And now it is after four; and she has had him out more than two hours, in the hottest part of the day, too. What *could* have tempted her to take the child out at this time of the day?"

"Drusa, dear, this was the way of it: Grandpa and Dick wished to explain to me the necessity of their immediate departure for Southampton. Little Lenny and his nurse were in the room. Grandpa and Dick did not want any other listener than myself, so they told Pina to take the child down to the sidewalk, thinking, of course, that so careful a nurse would keep him in the shade. So you see the girl was not to blame for taking the child out; though certainly I think she *is* for keeping him out so long. But still I don't think you need be uneasy, Drusa. Pina is no strange nurse. You have known her well for three years, and she has had the care of your child for two, and has always proved herself worthy of the trust. I hope you are not uneasy about him?"

"Oh, no! That is, I know I have no reason to be so, for Pina takes as great care of him as I could myself, only I think mothers are always uneasy when their infants are out of sight. I *wish* she would return."

"Oh, she will be back in a few minutes," said Anna, cheerfully.

"Listen! there is some one coming up," said Drusilla.

Steps and voices were indeed heard near the room, and almost immediately there was a knock at the door.

"Come in," said Anna.

The door was opened by a waiter, who put in his head and said:

"If you please, my ladies, here is a policeman brought home your nurse-maid almost in fits."

"Lenny! where is Lenny! Has anything happened to him? Have you brought home my child?" cried Drusilla, starting up and rushing to the door before Anna could even answer.

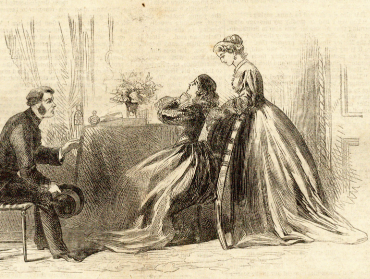
"My child! my child! where is my child?" she cried, clasping her hands in an agony of terror.

"My lady, from the girl's ravings I'm afeard she has——well, not to make it any worse than what it is—mislaid the child some'rs or other," said the policeman, coming forward half helping and half dragging Pina, who, as soon as she saw her mistress, sank with a gasp of mute anguish at her feet.

"Lenny! Lenny lost! Oh, Father! Oh, Heavenly Father, have mercy!" cried Drusilla, reeling back into the arms of Anna, who sprang forward to support her.

"The child missing! What do you mean? It cannot be! Pina, where is little Lenny?" demanded Anna, scarcely able to control her own terror and distress, even while she sustained the agonized mother. "Answer me, Pina, I say! Where is little Lenny?"

But Pina was past answering, past everything but grovelling at their feet and howling and tearing her hair.



THE POLICEMAN'S REPORT.

"Has the girl gone suddenly mad and so lost the child? Policeman, where and under what circumstances did you find her? Waiter, bring forward that easy chair."

The chair was rolled forward and Drusilla was eased into it, where she sat pale, mute, every sense on the *qui vive* to hear the policeman's story. Terrified, agonized, yet with a mighty effort holding herself still and calm, the bereaved young mother sat and listened to the policeman's account of his meeting with the nurse, after the loss of the child.

"If you please, my ladies, I first saw her in the Strand, tearing up and down the street, running after babies and nurses and bursting into shops and houses, and going on generally like one raving, distracted, with a rabble of boys at her heels hooting and jeering. So she being complained of by certain parties as she annoyed, and I, suspecting of her to be a mad woman broke loose from Bedlam, or leastways making a great disturbance in the streets, I takes her into custody, and should have took her off to the station-house and locked her up, only she began to howl about the child she had lost, and I began to see what had happened to her and how it was; and I asked her where she lived, and she told me and I brought her here; and that is all about it, my ladies; but if you can get more out of her nor I could, I think it would be well you should, and then maybe we could help you to get the child, my lady," said officer E, 48.

"Oh, missus! missus! kill me! kill me! it would be a mercy!" cried Pina, wringing her hands.

"I think it would be justice, at least," answered Anna, sternly.

"Where did you lose sight of him, Pina?" inquired the young mother, in a strangely quiet manner.

"Oh, missus! oh, missus! knock me in the head and put me out of my misery! do! do! do!" cried Pina, gnashing her teeth and tearing her hair, rolling on the floor and giving way to all her excess of grief and despair, with all the utter abandonment of her race.

"Pina!" sternly exclaimed Anna Hammond, "unless you are coherent and tell us where you lost Lenny, we shall not know where to look for him. Speak at once! where was it that you first missed him?"

"Oh, ma'am! Oh, Miss Anna! Strike me dead for pity! Oh, do! oh, do!" cried the girl, growing wilder every moment.

"Yes, ma'am, that was about all I could get out of her either. Begging and a praying of me to take her up and hang her because she had lost the boy. To hang her, to hang her, to hang her up by the neck until she was dead, dead, dead, was all her prayer."

"Waiter," said Drusilla, who, though agonized with grief and fear for her lost child, was now the most self-controlled and thoughtful of the party—"waiter, go quickly and fetch a glass of wine to this girl. It may restore her faculties."

The man sprang to do the lady's bidding, and soon returned with a bottle of sherry and a glass.

Drusilla herself filled the glass, and kneeling down beside her, put it to the lips of the prostrate girl.

"No, no, no!" cried Pina, pushing away the glass and spilling its contents—"no, no, no, I won't take it, I won't get better, I won't live! Somebody ought to smash me for losing little Lenny, and if they don't I'll die myself! I will! I will!"

"Pina! nobody blames you, at least I do not. Nobody wants you to die, or to be punished. Drink this, Pina, so you may be better able to tell me about my child," said Drusilla, gently, as she again offered wine to the girl.

"Oh, missus! Oh, missus! if it was poison I would take it cheerful, I would! for it do break my heart to look in your face and to think what I done!"

"You did nothing wicked, I'm sure. If you feel so much for me, drink this, for my sake, so that you may be better able to tell me about my child."

"I'll do anything for your sake, missus! goodness knows I will!" said Pina, as she swallowed the wine.

"Give her another glass, mum. She'll hardly feel that in her condition," advised the experienced policeman.

Drusilla hesitated. But Anna, less scrupulous, took the bottle and glass from her hand, filled the glass again and put it to Pina's lips with a peremptory:

"Drink this at once."

"Must I, missus?" asked Pina, turning to her mistress.

"Yes," answered Drusilla.

And Pina swallowed the second portion of wine.

"Now," said the policeman, after a few moments, extending his hand to Pina, lifting her up and placing her upon a chair—"now, my good girl, open your mouth and tell us all, how and about the loss of the child."

"Oh," cried Pina, bursting into tears afresh, "it was *him* at the bottom of it all, I know it was!"

"Who?" inquired E. 48.

"Him, Mr. Alexander, Mr. Lyon, Lord Killchristians, as they call him over here. Oh, dear! Oh, dear! Oh, me! Oh, little Lenny!"

"His father!" exclaimed Drusilla, in a half suppressed tone. And she breathed somewhat more freely; for she felt that if the child were with his father, the child was in no immediate personal danger—nay more, that his detention was but temporary; that he would soon be restored to her again. She thought that her husband might have ceased to love her, but she knew that he never would deliberately do the deadly wrong of tearing her child from her. Still she was intensely anxious to hear the details of the abduction; but she was also extremely unwilling to admit strangers to a participation of the intelligence that involved so much of her private history and domestic sorrows.

All these thoughts and feelings passed rapidly through her mind, while Pina was giving her answer, so when the policeman would have continued the examination by asking:

"*Who* was at the bottom of it, did you say, young woman? did you say a gentleman and—a lord? How was that? And what lord was it?"

"Lord Killchristians! Mr. Alexander Lyon as used to was, and a notorious willyun too! and the child's own——"

Here Drusilla broke into the conversation:

"Officer, these are private matters. I thank you very much for having brought this poor girl safely home, and I hope you will accept this trifle in payment," she added, placing a sovereign in his hand. "You may leave us now. We will examine this girl, and if we find that your services should be required in the search, we will send for you; or you can call here in the course of an hour."

"Thank you, my lady. I will call and see if I am wanted at the time you say," answered the policeman, lifting his hand to his head by way of salute, and then leaving the room, followed by the waiter.

"Now then, Pina, you say that little Lenny's father has got him?" said Drusilla, trembling with excess of emotion, yet still striving to keep calm.

"Yes, ma'am, I suppose he has by this time," sobbed the girl.

"You suppose he has by this time? Pina, Pina! that is not what you said before. Pina, what do you mean? You surely said his father had him!"

"I said Mr. Lyon was at the bottom of it, ma'am—at the bottom of little Lenny's being carried off, I mean—and I stand to it, as he was!"

"Oh, Heaven! did not his father carry him off, then?"

"No, ma'am; not with his own hands, but he was at the bottom of it—I say it, and I stand to it!"

"Merciful Heaven! if his father did not carry him off, who then did? Girl, girl! do you know how you torture me? I thought at first my Lenny had been lost by straying away from you; then you said his father was concerned in his disappearance; now you say his father did not take him! In the name of Mercy, who did? Speak—for the Lord's sake, speak quickly?"

"Oh, ma'am, I will—I will tell you all I know, but don't, don't look so—don't, ma'am, or you'll kill me!" sobbed Pina.

"TELL WHO TOOK THE CHILD, THEN!" said Anna, speaking sternly and stamping her foot.

"I DON'T KNOW WHO DID!" burst, amid sobs, from Pina's lips.

Drusilla stifled the shrieks that were ready to burst from her lips.

"You don't know who did! Why, then, did you accuse Lord Killcrichtoun?" demanded Anna.

"I didn't accuse him, ma'am—I said as he was at the bottom of it," said Pina, who seemed to be unable to change her phraseology. "I said he was at the bottom of it—and I stand to it as he was!"

"Oh, Anna, Anna, time flies! If Lenny is not with Alick, where is he? Oh, where is he? He must be found at once—at once! I cannot live or breathe till he is found! She must be made to tell how she lost him!" cried Drusilla, losing all her self-command and starting up in great excitement,—"He must be sought for, Anna! he must be sought for at once!"

"Of course he must; but the search must be commenced with this girl who was the last person with him. Pina, you say you don't know who took the child from you?"

"No, ma'am, I don't—but know his father was at the bottom of it—I know it, and I'll stand to it!"

"Why do you think so?"

"Oh, Anna, Anna, you lose time with all this talk!"

"No, I don't; we must find out from her where and how we are to begin to search. Now, Pina, why do you think Lord Killcrichtonn was concerned in this matter?"

"Lor', ma'am, because it stands to reason as he was. Lenny is his own son, which also they are very fond of each other—Lenny of he, and him of Lenny! And so it was nateral he should want to have him. I'm not saying as it was right or anything like right, but it was so!"

"Oh, Anna, Anna, time flying, and no facts learned yet—only conjectures! Let me talk to her myself. Pina, where were you when you missed little Lenny?" inquired Drusilla, distractedly.

"Oh, ma'am! oh, missus, don't take on so—don't, and I will tell you! He was down on the Strand, a-looking in at a toy-shop—oh, dear! oh, me! oh, poor little Lenny!"

"Oh, for the Lord's sake, stop crying, and tell me more! You were before a toy-shop you say?" said Drusilla, in extreme anxiety.

"Yes, ma'am, a-looking in at the windows, at the wooden soldiers, and horses, and ships; and there comes along a man with an organ and a dancing-monkey. And little Lenny turned away from the window to look at the monkey. And a crowd collected. They was mostly children. And little Lenny is fond of children—and so—oh! oh, dear! oh, my heart will break!"

"Compose yourself, and go on, Pina!" said Anna.

"Yes, ma'am. Oh! oh, dear! Yes—well, little Lenny wanted to mix up with them; but they was mostly ragged and dirty street children, and I was afeard of fevers, and fleas, and sich, and so I kept him to myself, so I did. Oh! oh, me! I wish I had always kept him to myself, so I do!" sobbed Pina.

"Go on," said Anna.

"And I saw two ill-looking men in the crowd. And indeed I didn't think nothing of it at the time, because ill-looking men ain't no rarity in no city, and that I know of my own self. And these men, most of their ill-looks was in their dirty and ragged clothes, and bruised and fiery faces. And while I was a-taking notice of 'em on the sly, one of 'em says to the other:

"'There—that's the young 'un.'

"And the other says:

"'Which?'

"And the first one stoops and whispers to the other, so I couldn't hear. And then they fell back out of the crowd a little ways, and began to look into the shop-windows unconcerned-like. And indeed, indeed, I had no notion then as they had been talking about little Lenny, such wilyuns as they were, though I have thought so since! Oh, Lenny! oh, dear little Lenny! I wish somebody would knock my brains out, so I do! Oh, dear! oh, dear! oh——!"

"Pina, stop howling, and go on with this statement!" said Anna, authoritatively, while Drusilla clasped her hands, and listened in an agony of anxiety.

"Well, ma'am, after the men turned away, little Lenny began to tease me for pennies to give to the dancing-monkey—and I gave him all I had, and he ran into the crowd to put them into the hat the monkey was holding out."

"You should not have let him do that," said Anna.

"Ma'am, you know how sudden and self-willed he is! He sprang away from me before I could stop him. And I ran after him to bring him out. But, just at that very moment, there came rushing down the sidewalk, aad right through the crowd, a man with his head bare and bloody, followed by a running crowd, all yelling at the top of their voices:

"'Stop thief! stop thief!'

"And they overturned the organ man and his dancing-monkey, and carried off his crowd with them. I ran after them calling for little Lenny, who was swept out of my sight by the rushing stream of people. I ran with all my speed and I called with all my voice, but I got knocked from one side of the walk to the other, and thrown down, and run over, and trampled on, and swore at, and—and that was the way I lost little Lenny. I was hunting up and down for him when the policeman found me and fetched me home. Oh, dear! oh, me, that ever I should live to see the day! Oh, missus! oh, Miss Anna! oh——"

"Now stop. Let us talk calmly for a moment," said Anna," reflectively. "Let me see. Lenny could not have been hurried off by those thief-hunters; because, if he had been, a tender little creature like himself would have been thrown down, run over, and left behind, and you would have found him on the ground, more or less injured."

"That was what I was a dreading of every minute, Miss Anna. Oh, little Lenny! dear little Lenny!"

"Therefore," continued Anna, "as he was not so run over and left, he must have been snatched up by some one and carried off under cover of the confusion. The kidnapper probably darted up one of the side streets or alleys, and disappeared with his prey in that way."

"That was what I thought, too, Miss Anna, when I remembered seeing them bad-looking men and hearing what they said. They was a watching of their opportunity to seize little Lenny and run away with him; and in course they must have been set on by his father, who wanted him; else what call would they have to take the child?—they who didn't look as if they had overmuch love for children, or for any other creatures, to tell the holy truth; no, nor likewise did they look as if they was able to keep themselves from starving, much less a child; so it stands to reason as they was hired to seize little Lenny by some un who *did* love him, and *was* able to keep him; and who could that have been but his own father?"

"Pina, I think you are probably right in your conjecture, for I cannot even imagine what motive two such men as you describe could possibly have for stealing a child like Lenny. They must have been employed by his father, and if so, they must have been engaged some days ago, and have been on the lookout for the boy ever since."

"Oh Anna, Anna, do you really think he is with his father? If I thought so, one-half this horrible anxiety would be quieted. Oh, Anna, do you truly think Lenny is with Alick?" cried Drusilla, clasping her hands.

"I have little doubt that Alexander employed these men to get little Lenny. I have little doubt but that, for the sake of gain, they will faithfully perform their part of the compact. My only wonder is that Alick should have employed such very disreputable instruments."

"Pina, is that all? Do you know no more?" anxiously inquired Drusilla.

"It is all, missus—every bit. I have told you not only all that happened, but all I seed and heard and even thought."

"Now then for action," said the young mother, rising with a new-born resolution and ringing the bell.

The waiter answered it.

"Order a cab for me immediately, and come and let me know when it is at the door," she said.

And when the man went away ta do her bidding, she turned to Pina and said:

"Stop crying, and do as I direct you. Go to my room and bring me here my bonnet, gloves and mantle."

Pina, still sobbing, went to obey.

"And now, Anna, if you wish to accompany me, go and get ready quietly. I have something to do in the meanwhile."

"Where are you going, Drusilla?" inquired Mrs. Hammond, wondering to see the agonized young mother take the direction of affairs with so much firmness.

"I am going to institute a search for little Lenny. I must find him before I sleep. Use your pleasure, Anna dear, in going with me, or staying at home."

"I shall go with you most certainly," said Mrs. Hammond, leaving the room to prepare for her ride.

Meanwhile Drusilla sat down to her writing-desk, and wrote off rapidly, disjointed paragraphs on several sheets of paper.

Anna returned ready for her drive, and found Drusilla thus occupied.

"What in the world are you doing, my dear?" inquired Mrs. Hammond.

"Preparing slips of paper that may, or may not, be wanted; for no time must be lost. See, here is a telegram to be sent to uncle at Southampton, if necessary. Here are a dozen copies of an advertisement, descriptive of little Lenny's person and dress, and of the circumstances of his disappearance, and the reward offered for his restoration, to be put, if required, into to-morrow's papers. Still I hope that none of these things need be done. We must drive first to Mivart's, where Alexander stops, or did stop, and see if he is still there, and if he has the child in his possession. If we find that Lenny is safe with his father, then it will be all right, for I feel sure that my boy will be amused and happy for a little while, and then he will want to come home to me, and Alick will never be so cruel as to keep him from his mother. But if we do not find him with Alick, then we must send this telegram immediately to Southampton to summon uncle back to town; and we must have this advertisement inserted in all the papers, and posted all over London; and we must employ the whole detective police force, or as many of it as we can procure, to prosecute the search—— It is time the cab were here. I wish it would come," said Drusilla, touching the bell.

"Good Heaven, Drusilla! how you do astonish me! Who would have believed that you—a young and delicate woman, a doting and anxious mother—could have displayed so much coolness and resolution in such an hour of trial and suffering," exclaimed Anna, in genuine admiration.

"Ah, Anna! if experience has disciplined me in anything, it has disciplined me in self-control."

At this moment the door opened, and the waiter appeared and announced:

"Your cab waits, madam."

"Come, then," said Drusilla.

And followed by Anna and attended by Pina, she hurried down stairs.

They entered the cab, gave the order, and were driven rapidly towards Mivart's hotel.

The drive was accomplished in almost perfect silence.

Drusilla sat pale and still, suffering inexpressible anguish, yet controlling herself by a mighty effort.

Anna was occupied by her own anxious thoughts. Of course *she* knew the mission to Mivart's in search of Alick to be quite vain, and worse than vain, since it involved loss of time where time was of vital importance; yet she dared not enlighten Drusilla by explaining the absence of Alexander, for she feared by doing so to add to the terrible anxiety that was already oppressing the young wife and mother. And, also, Anna suspected that Alexander really was concerned in the abduction of little Lenny; that he had hired those men to carry him off; and had most probably instructed them to bring him to Mivart's. Therefore, although she knew there was no chance of finding Alexander, she cherished some hope of hearing of little Lenny. The men who abducted him might have carried him there, not knowing of their employer's absence. If so, little Lenny might be recovered before the day was over.

Amid all her grave anxieties, Anna felt some little curiosity upon one point: Drusilla had grown so sensitive and timid in regard to her beloved but truant husband that she had shrunk even from the casual glance of his eye in public; and now she was going to Mivart's in quest of him; after all that had passed, she was voluntarily seeking him; true, it was to find the child; true, also, she could not see her husband; but—would she ask to see Alexander? Could she endure to see him? What were her thoughts and feelings on that subject? Anna would ask.

"Drusilla," she said, "when we reach Mivart's shall you send in your card to Alexander?"

The young mother started. She had been in a deep reverie about the present condition of her child, and had not heard her distinctly.

Anna repeated her question.

"Yes; I shall send in my card," she said.

"And shall you see him?"

"That shall be as he pleases. Here is the card that I have prepared to send in to him," she continued, taking from her gold case a small envelope directed to Lord Killcrichtoun, and drawing from it her card, bearing the name, "MRS. ALEXANDER LYON," and the pencilled lines, "*Only tell me little Lenny is with you and is safe and I will thank and bless you.*" "I shall send that up. He can reply to it by a pencilled line, or a verbal message, or he can come down and see me, as he wills," said Drusilla.

"Drusa, you have thought of everything; you have prepared for every emergency. But maternal love is a great sharpener of the wits, I suppose," said Anna.

"It confers a sixth sense I sometimes think, Anna," she replied.

When they reached the splendid palace in the West End known as Mivart's Hotel, the ladies alighted, and were shown into an elegant reception room, where they sat down.

Drusilla then called a hall waiter, gave him her enveloped card, and directed him to take it at once to Lord Killcrichtoun.

"Lord Killcrichtoun is not in town, madam," replied the man.

"Not in town!" exclaimed Drusilla, disappointment and terror seizing her heart and blanching her face. "I thought he was in town! I saw him last night at the American Embassy. Does he not stop here?"

"Yes, madam; my lord has apartments here, but he left suddenly this morning by the early train for Southampton."

"For Southampton!" echoed Drusilla, in surprise and dismay, and with the vague fear that his journey thither was in some fatal way the occasion of General Lyon's and Dick's sudden departure for that port.

"Yes, madam," answered the imperturbable waiter, "my lord left by the eight o'clock train, taking his servants with him."

"When will he return?"

"Can't possibly say, madam. My lord set no day for his return. But if you will excuse me, I will make so bold as to say I do not think he will be gone long. He took nothing but a small portmanteau with him."

Drusilla reflected a moment and then sealing her envelope, and handing it to the waiter with a crown piece, she said:

"Will you be so kind as to send this to his address at Southampton?"

"Why, madam, if you would not mind risking the note, I might send it at a venture to the Dolphin Tavern at Southampton, where it might chance to meet my lord, as that is the house he usually has his letters and papers sent to, when down there. But I am not quite certain now about his address, seeing that he never left any orders this time where to send his letters. But if this is not very valuable, you might run the risk of sending it to the Dolphin."

"I thank you, send it immediately to the Dolphin. It is not of itself of any worth, except as a message to Lord Killcrichtoun. If it does not find him, it might as well be lost," said Drusilla, rising to go.

But Anna had also something to say to the waiter. Laying her hand upon Drusilla's arm, she pressed her back into her seat, and then turning to the man, she inquired:

"Has any one beside ourselves been here to inquire for Lord Killcrichtoun?"

"Yes, madam, many persons."

"Gentlemen or ladies?"

"No ladies, madam. Three gentlemen were in to see him very early this morning, before he went away."

"Ah, but I mean since he went away."

"Oh, yes, madam, quite a number."

"Again, gentlemen or ladies?"

"Neither one nor the other, madam; *men.*"

"Men! Ah! what sort of men?"

"Common, roughs, madam."

"Yes! yes! did any of these men have a child with them?"

"Beg pardon, madam?"

"I ask you if either of these rough-looking men had a child with him—a fair-haired, blue-eyed little boy, of about two years old."

"No, madam, certainly not."

"You are sure?"

"Perfectly sure, madam."

"Well, waiter, attend now to me. We have lost a child—and have some reason to suppose that the child was brought to this house this afternoon."

"It has not, madam, I can assure you."

"We have cause to believe, then, that he will be brought here—Drusilla, dear, give me one of your cards and one of these advertisements—Now here, waiter, is a description of the child; and here is our address. If such a child should be brought here, I desire that you will detain him, and those who bring him, and send for us. Do this and you shall be richly rewarded."

"I will do it, ma'am, if the little boy should be brought here," said the man.

And then, as time was precious, Drusilla and Anna arose and re-entered their cab.

"Where now, Drusilla?" inquired Anna, as they seated themselves.

Instead of answering her cousin immediately, Drusilla beckoned the cabman to approach, and said:

"Drive to the nearest Telegraph Office, and drive fast."

The man touched his hat, shut the door, mounted his box and started his horses.

Then Drusilla turned to her cousin and explained:

"My dear Alick may, or may not have employed those men to carry off little Lenny. If he has done so, he could not have expected them to do his errand to-day, else certainly he would not have left town with the chance of leaving the child in such hands. In that view of the case I left my card with the pencilled lines for the waiter to send to him, to let him know that Lenny is in the hands of his agents, supposing that they *are* his, and in any case to let him know the child is missing."

"Oh, Drusilla! how clearly you speak, and yet and yet how wretchedly you look! Heaven help you poor, young mother!" said Mrs. Hammond, as the tears rushed to her eyes.

"Oh, Anna! don't, don't, dear! don't pity me! don't say anything to weaken me! I have need of all my strength!" cried Drusilla, through her white and quivering lips.

Anna, with heaving bosom and overflowing eyes, turned her head away from her and looked out of the window.

"You asked me just now where we were going next. You heard me tell the cabman to drive to the Telegraph Office. I must send off two telegrams to Southampton. I cannot wait the slow motions of the mails. One I shall send to Alick, directed at a venture to the 'Dolphin.' The other I must send to uncle; but you must tell me where to direct that, as I do not know his address," said Drusilla.

"Dick told me, in any sudden emergency that might require his or grandpa's presence, to direct to them at the 'International,'" replied Anna.

"Very well; we will telegraph there."

At this moment the cab stopped before the Telegraph Office.

The office of course was full of people, and Anna and Drusilla had to wait their turn.

While standing at the counter, Drusilla borrowed pen, ink and paper from one of the clerks and wrote her two messages. The first, addressed to her husband, ran thus:

"*Little Lenny was stolen from his nurse, by two men, this afternoon, in the Strand, and has not yet been recovered.* DRUSILLA."

She submitted this to the examination of Anna, saying:

"That is quite enough and not too much to send. If he is concerned in the abduction, he will hasten at once to London to take the child from the dangerous hands he is in. If he is not so, still I think he will hurry hither to help in the search."

"You reason rightly, dear," said Anna.

Drusilla then wrote a second message, to be sent to General Lyon. It was couched in these terms:

"*Little Lenny is missing since this afternoon. Come to London by the first train. If in the interim you have time to do so, seek Alexander at the Dolphin and tell him.*"

This also she showed to Anna, saying:

"You see I had to modify my message since learning that Alexander was also in Southampton; and so also I had to destroy the slip I wrote at the Morley House and prepare this. Now I see it is my turn to be served," she said, taking her two messages and carrying them to the operator. She paid for them and then inquired:

"How soon will these go?"

"This instant, mum," answered the bothered operator, so brusquely that Drusilla did not venture to ask another question, but merely left her address and a request that if an answer came to either of her telegrams it might be forwarded immediately.

"Now, my dear, where next?" inquired Anna, as they re-entered their carriage.

"To the 'Times' office, and from there to all the newspaper offices in turn. It may not be really necessary to advertise; and I hope that it is not; but still I must lose no time and miss no chance," said Drusilla.

And having given her order to the cabman, she was driven rapidly to the head-quarters of the great thunderer.

She got out and left her advertisement. And then returning to her carriage, ordered it to the office of the "Post."

And so in succession she visited the offices of the "Chronicle," "Express," "Dispatch," "Leader," "News," "Bulletin," and, in short, of every daily paper in London.

In each of the offices she also, in addition to giving in her advertisement for the paper, ordered posters of the lost child to be printed, and engaged bill stickers to paste them up.

Next she drove to the lodgings of the Seymour family, to tell the colonel of the loss of little Lenny, and to ask him to assist her in the search for the child.

But here she was informed that Colonel Seymour and the latter were gone to the theatre; but that the servants did not know what particular theatre.

So Drusilla wrote a note and left it for the colonel.

It was now nine o'clock, and quite dark; and having done all she could possibly do towards the recovery of her child, she ordered the cabman to drive back to the hotel, to meet the horrors of her lonely night and forced inaction.

And, oh! the awful sense of bereavement, of loneliness, of vacancy, in entering again her apartments, in which little Lenny was no longer to be found! The heart-rending pang of terror in conjecturing where he might be!

While she had been busily, actively engaged in taking measures for his recovery, her thoughts had been somewhat distracted from concentrating themselves upon his present condition.

But now, when she had done all that she could possibly do towards finding him, now that she had come home to the old familiar rooms, made desolate by his loss, and was obliged to abide in inactivity within them,—now that she missed him everywhere and every moment,—the reaction from courage to despair was so sudden and overwhelming that her very brain reeled, her reason for the moment seemed imperilled. With a half-stifled cry, she sank upon her chair, muttering with gasping breath:

"It is not possible! it cannot be! Lenny gone, and I not know where he is! WAKE ME! WAKE ME! I have the night-mare!"

Anna sprang to her side, and put her arms around her, saying:

"Drusilla, Drusilla! my darling, courageous girl! collect your powers—control yourself!"

"Is it TRUE, Anna? Oh, say it is not—not true! Lenny is NOT LOST!" she exclaimed, wildly gazing into Anna's eyes.

"We hope that he is safe wherever he is," said Anna, wishingly.

"Wherever he is! Oh, my Heaven, yes it is so! He is lost, and we do not know where to find him!" she exclaimed, distractedly starting up and walking the floor, and wringing and twisting her hands. "Where is he? where is he to-night? Oh, in all this great crowded city, where is my little child—my poor, little two-year old child, who cannot help himself? He is frightened to death wherever he is—I know it! He is calling for me! he is crying for me, at this very moment! Oh, my Lenny, my Lenny! I would go to you through fire if I knew where to find you in this great Babylon! I would, my little one, I would! But I do not know where in this wilderness to look for you to-night, and you must cry for me in vain, my little child, you must! Oh, what a horrible night! I cannot, I cannot live through it! I cannot breathe in this house! I must go out and look for him again! I must! I must!"

Her head was thrown back, her arms raised, and her hands clasped upon her throbbing temples, and she reeled as she walked to and fro in the room.

Anna who had kept near her, seeing her about to fall, caught her and made her sit down, while she said:

"Drusa, dearest, be reasonable! be yourself!"

"I must go out and look for my little child! I must, Anna! I must! I can not live through this horrible night if I stay in this house!" she cried.

"Drusa, consider! you can do no good by going out to-night, but much harm. You could not find little Lenny, but you would lose yourself. You have already done all that you possibly could do for his recovery. Having done so, leave the result to Heaven."

"Oh, if we could only know where he is!"

"We shall find out to-morrow, no doubt. The advertisements will be read; the posters will be seen; the large reward offered will stimulate inquiry; the detective police will be on the alert; and, in all human probability, before this time to-morrow little Lenny will be in your arms! and grandpa, and Dick, and who knows but Alick, too, will all be here rejoicing with you in your child's restoration! Drusilla, this cloud may have a silver lining; this transient trial may bring about a great happiness," said Anna, speaking with perhaps more cheerful confidence than she really felt.

"Heaven grant it! Oh, Heaven in its mercy grant it! But till then! But to-night! Oh, how shall I live through this horrible night! How will my little child endure it! my tender little child, who was never away from me before! And, oh, in what wretchedness he may be! in what terror! in what danger! crying for his mother to come and take him, and she knows not where to find him!"

"Drusilla! Drusilla! use your own excellent judgment. Is it likely at all that the child should be in danger to-night, or even in terror? Children live and thrive in the lowest haunts of London. The men who stole him for his father will of course take the best possible care of him in order to deliver him in the best condition and to get their money; so he will be in no danger; and as for his being in terror, little Lenny is a 'game boy,' afraid of nothing on earth, neither of 'thunder nor horses,' as he once told me, much less of men; and as to crying for you, he is probably by this time fast asleep, and well watched, for his abductors know that he is a treasure that will bring money to their ragged pockets."

"Oh, if I could think so!—oh, if I could think so! Or if I could only know where he is—know where I might lay my hand on him to-night, or to-morrow, I might be at something like peace; but oh, Anna, it is distracting, it is maddening to feel that in all this huge, crowded city I do not know where he is!"

"Drusilla," said Anna, laying her hand upon the young mother's shoulder, looking in her eyes, speaking sweetly and solemnly, and appealing to the deepest feelings of the young Christian's soul. "Drusilla, if *we* do not know where little Lenny is to-night, *his Heavenly Father does.* He sees him, watches over him, protects him. What would *your* knowledge of his whereabouts, or *your* power to protect him, be to that of his Heavenly Father, Whose eyes are over all his works, Who is as All-Merciful as he is All-Mighty. Take this faith home to your heart and let it comfort you."

"Oh, Anna, that does comfort me. To think that the Lord knows where he is, though I do not; the Lord sees him, though I do not; the Lord can take care of him, though I cannot. Oh, I thought no one but the thieves could know where little Lenny is to-night; but behold the Lord knows! And I feared that I could do nothing more for him to-night; but behold I can pray to the Lord for him. I will spend the night in praying for him!" said the bereaved mother, growing somewhat more composed.

But there was no going to bed in the ladies' apartments that night.

As they had not broken their fast since morning, Anna ordered tea to be served in the drawing-room. Consumed by the feverish thirst brought on by mental distress, they drank some tea, but would eat nothing.

When the service was removed, both went to Anna's room, for Drusilla did not dare to trust herself within her own desolated chamber, and they changed their carriage dresses for loose wrappers, and they spent the night in vigil and in prayer.

[TO BE CONTINUED IN OUR NEXT.]

THE TRUE LIFE.

BY WILLIAM ROSS WALLACE.

Well the earnest poet's lyre,
  Made of iron and of gold,
To his listening mighty nation
  Sung upon the hills, of old—

Not in years we live, and dials
  Are in vain; mind, heart, must count:
'Tis in noble thought and feeling
  We to real being mount:

Thought that pierces, spans creation,
  Feeling that will grandly wed
Human spirit to the Maker—
  This unknown and we are dead.

Nations, marching in the Present,
  Like that nation hear the lyre,
Like it with such thought and feeling
  Push to godlike action's fire.

This the race that makes heroic:
  This the life from which we rise
And win an everlasting movement
  Mid the armies of the skies,
Every glorious heavenly moment
  Winning yet another prize.

THE EVIL GENIUS.

By ELIZA A. DUPUY,

AUTHOR OF "THE WHITE TERROR," "WARNING VOICE," "THE FATAL ERROR," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

Mrs. Markland was still a very handsome woman in spite of her forty-five years; tall and commanding in person, with features cast in the same mould as those of her son; from her also had Fenton inherited his abundant light hair, and that of his mother was still as bright and soft as in her youth. The color of the eyes was the same in both, though those of the young man were more animated and less expressive of pride than those of his mother.

She wore a heavy steel-gray silk, trimmed with black, with a filmy-lace collar fastened with a pin, in which was set the miniature of her last husband set around with pearls. She had made her toilette in the expectation that her son would arrive before the day was over, and had taken as much pains to impress him with her stately beauty as though he had been a stranger.

As Fenton looked into her haughty face and saw the play of her reticent lips, he felt the old spell coming back upon him, and he knew beforehand that he should be moulded by his tenacious mother to any course she willed him to take. She quietly said:

"I am most happy to welcome you to my house again, my son, but I have the sad mortification of fearing that you come to it unwillingly; that the news of my recent illness alone recalled you to the society of your mother and sisters. But that conviction shall make no difference in my treatment of you, for you are not less the hope of my heart and the pride of my life than you were in your boyhood, Godfrey. You are handsomer than ever, though you are looking jaded and unhappy."

"Dear mother, don't reproach me with the last, in the first moment of meeting. I have withheld nothing from you; my heart has been laid open to your inspection before I came hither, and I do hope that you will exercise some forbearance toward me. I am glad to be at home again, though I confess that I most unwillingly obeyed the summons that tore me from the one who is dearest to me in life."

"*Dearest!* Yes, I suppose the fondest mother must yield her claim to the warmest place in the heart of her son, even when he wooes a wife without her permission. But not another word of this before the children; when we are alone we can fully discuss the last insane letter you sent me, for I believe that nothing short of madness could have dictated it."

Fenton yielded passively to her imperious command, as he always did when he was under the magnetic influence of her presence. They sat down together in her luxuriously furnished chamber, and talked over the incidents of his journey, while the two girls listened with absorbing interest, both fully impressed with the conviction that their brother was the most elegant and delightful man the world could boast of. They had been brought up to make a sort of household divinity of their mother's eldest-born; and the affectionate petting he lavished on them had won the warmest affection of their young hearts.

As the last rays of the evening sunshine were fading from the landscape, Fenton took up his hat and, rising, said:

"I must go out before supper and visit the quarters; the negroes will expect to see me before I retire, and this is the hour for them to return from the field."

"Yes, it will be best for you to go now, for, when supper is over, I have much to say to you that is important to your future welfare," said Mrs. Markland significantly.

Fenton colored, bit his lip, and, followed by his sisters, left the room.

"We will go with you to see the darkies gather around you and make much of you, brother," said Dora, taking up her straw hat as she passed through the hall. Jenny tied a nubia over her head, and the three went out together.

They were detained in the yard by a group of house-servants, who had impatiently awaited Fenton's appearance, for not one of them had presumed to intrude on the interview between the mother and son. To each one he spoke some pleasant word of greeting, and his gay and cheerful ways made him very popular among those simple-hearted people, who prize a courteous manner to themselves above every thing else.

"God bless him! Marse Godfrey is the *real* gentleman!" was heard from more than one, as he moved on his way to the quarters.

A quarter of a mile distant was a double row of frame cottages shaded by forest trees, with a wide street between them and small gardens for vegetables in the rear. Each one had its poultry house, and many of them a fig-tree, as that is the only fruit the negroes will not devour in its unripe state.

The "people" were trooping in, bearing large baskets filled with cotton, to be weighed by the overseer, who was standing under a shed which projected from the gin-house. A pair of large scales were near him; and, in one hand, he held a slate, on which the number of pounds picked by each hand that day was jotted down opposite the name of the laborer.

The overseer nodded to Fenton, and went on with his employment, while the negroes crowded around him, and, as Dora had said, made much of him by calling down blessings on his handsome face and predicting all manner of good luck for him in the future. He had known them all from boyhood, and not one of them could recall a hard or unkind act of his in which they were concerned; therefore they all loved him; and when "Missis" settled him on a place of his own, as it was understood she intended to do when he married, each one vaguely hoped that he or she would chance to fall to Marse Godfrey, for no division of the slaves had yet been made, and they were ignorant to whom they were to fall when that was done.

Fenton was really glad to meet his sable friends again, and he returned to the house in better spirits and fortified for the formidable interview that he knew awaited him.

He found his mother in the dining-room with a brilliant array of china and silver before her, for she had set forth the best her house contained in honor of her son's arrival. The supper was delicate and deliciously cooked, and Fenton saw that his favorite dishes had not been forgotten. But he had little appetite in spite of the drive he had taken; and, after drinking a cup of tea and eating a few rice cakes, he amused himself with teazing his sisters till the meal was over.

When they arose from the table, Mrs. Markland led the way to the library, whither they were followed by Dora and Jenny. Fenton tried to put off the evil hour by detaining them to answer questions concerning their studies; and he learned that they attended a private school on the adjoining plantation, where an accomplished governess was employed. He listened with pretended interest to many anecdotes about Miss King's management of her pupils; but at length Mrs. Markland put an end to this by saying:

"It is eight o'clock, children; go to your room and prepare your lessons for to-morrow. I wish to talk with your brother in private, but on Saturday you shall have him all to yourselves."

"Oh, mamma," pouted Jenny, "I thought when Godfrey came that we were to have a holiday. We have but one more day to go to school this week, and I think you might let us off from lessons to-night!"

Mrs. Markland coldly replied:

"You know that I never excuse you for any cause but illness. Go now, my dears, and attend to your duties. They are things that must not be neglected when it is possible to perform them. You would gain nothing by doing so now, for your brother will not be at home to-morrow. I have accepted an invitation for him to dine at Silvermere, and you know it is against my rules to permit you to go to dinner parties."

The tone of her voice admitted of no remonstrance, and the reluctant children arose, kissed their mother as was their habit on retiring, caressed their brother tenderly, and retired, attended by a black girl who had been rung for to take charge of them.

The door closed on them, and Fenton hastened to say something that should for a few moments defer the attack he knew his mother was meditating.

"Dora is growing into a lovely woman, mother. You will soon have a daughter to present to society as a belle."

"Yes, she is pretty, but too small and dark to be brilliant. Jenny will eclipse her, and I am glad of the difference in their ages, as it will give the elder one a chance to settle in life before the younger is brought forward."

"I hardly agree with you. Dark women are more to my taste than fair ones, and I think Dora a charming brunette."

"I am sorry to hear that your taste inclines that way," replied Mrs. Markland, drily. "I wonder, too, that it should, considering that the girl you are bound to make your wife is as fair as a lily, and, what is better, as pure and sweet as one, too."

The battle had begun in earnest now he knew, and Fenton would not show the white feather in the first onslaught. He steadily replied:

"I do not consider myself bound by a promise I never made. I will not affect to misunderstand you, mother; but I thought that by this time you understood how impossible it is for me to ratify the contract you and Mr. Hastings made for Opal and myself. She cares nothing for me, and you know that I love another with all the strength of my heart."

"I have heard such men as you talk in the same way before, Godfrey; yet they ultimately came to their sober senses, and did what their interests required. *Yours* are bound up with this marriage, and I will not listen to anything that militates against it."

Her tone was cold and imperative, and her eyes were defiant and masterful. Mrs. Markland felt sure that she was mistress of the field, and she fully intended to drive the rebel to capitulate on her own terms.

Fenton passionately cried out:

"Mother, mother, do not say that, for I should be a wretch—a base and dishonored man—if I could ask Opal Hastings to be my wife when my whole heart is devoted to another. I cannot—I dare not do it."

His mother disdainfully asked:

"And that other? Who is she?—what is she, that you should presume to ask me to receive her as my daughter in place of the charming girl I have always intended you to marry. Has she wealth with which to endow you? for I assure you that you will get nothing from me, absolutely *nothing*, if you persist in this folly."

"She has beauty, youth, loveliness of heart and mind, but, alas! her hopes of fortune are blasted. Oh, mother, Inez Lopez is everything to me! I desire her for my own above every other earthly gift. I never thought to love any one as I love her, and without her companionship the fair promise of my life will be blighted. Recall your cruel words, for I cannot bear them. I cannot give Inez up—I cannot—I cannot—and, besides, I am bound in honor to her."

Mrs. Markland was unmoved by this passionate outbreak. She coldly replied:

"Your sense of honor must be very peculiar. What right had you, in your position, to entangle yourself with this young lady? Did you not fully understand that you were not free to ask her to become your wife? Listen to me, Godfrey. My heart has for years been set on this match between you and Opal. I love her almost as if she were my own daughter, and when you have been thrown with her, you must soon feel the witchery she exercises over all who approach her. You must break with Miss Lopez; lay the blame on me if you will, and she cannot ask you to ruin your prospects by disobeying the mother on whom you are dependent. I wish you to understand fully that I will do nothing for you if you thwart me in this. I will withdraw your allowance, and leave you to fight your own battle with the world as you best can. I shall lose my son; but he will lose all that he might have claimed had he shown the deference to my wishes that I consider my due."

Fenton arose and paced the floor in uncontrollable excitement. He at length paused, turned his pallid face toward her, and cried in tones of anguish:

"You will drive me wild, Madam. I came to you in the hope that you would hear what I had to say in a different spirit; but you goad me beyond endurance; you threaten in place of consoling me, when, God knows! I need it so much. If you knew, if you could be made to understand what my betrothed is to me, you would shrink from asking me to give her up. I shall go to ruin; I may do something dreadful in my desperation if you treat me thus."

In a more gentle tone, Mrs. Markland replied:

"It is to save you from ruin that I am firm, my son. Do you suppose that I would wound you by using such threats if I did not clearly see that you are ready to rush into a position for which you are entirely unfitted? What could you do toward maintaining a wife? You have talent, it is true; but it has been directed into no channel that could secure independence through your own exertions. You have expensive tastes, a fastidious shrinking from trade, or indeed from labor of any kind. Then what prospect would you have before you in taking a dowerless bride to your bosom? It will never do, Godfrey. Miss Lopez may be an angel; I am willing to concede every perfection to her; but she is no fitting mate for you. If I could be wrought on to consent to your union with her, in five years from its date you would both have cause to wish that you had never seen each other."

"I do not believe it! Inez would be the blessing of my life; she would make me a noble and true man, capable of filling the position every man should as the provider of his family and the head of his house."

"If she can accomplish *that*, you may try the experiment if you elect to do so. But if you do, remember that you are never to look to me for anything. I will otherwise dispose of what I have hoarded for you; I will throw you utterly on your own resources, and try and forget the ingrate who has returned all my care, all my fondness, by disappointing the wish that lies nearest my heart."

She leaned back on her seat, pale and defiant, and Fenton bitterly said:

"I would to God that I had a trade, profession, anything, to enable me to make my own way in life. I could work for Inez; I should be happy in doing so if I only knew how. But the accursed idleness in which I have been reared places me at your mercy, and enables you to grind me to the dust. When you see the result of what you are now doing, you may learn to think that it had been better to leave me to find my happiness in my own way."

His mother hearkened to the last words with a feeling of triumph, for they indicated that the fortress was about to strike its colors. She understood that he dared not face the future with no hand to sustain, no reserve to fall back on. After a few moments' reflection, she quietly said:

"I am only doing my duty by you, Godfrey. I must save you from yourself, for you are not now in a state to judge correctly of what will be best for your future welfare. Insane as you seem to be about this young girl, I believe that she is not the only one with whom you have thought yourself violently enamored since you went North. John Wallis told me of a flirtation with a music teacher in New Haven, but of course I knew you too well to suppose that you could be in earnest with *her.*"

With some heat Fenton replied:

"Wallis had little to do to tell you of such a thing as that, ma'am. There was nothing in it. Miss Gordon sang well—she was pretty and gay, and—and she reminded me of Opal. I paid her more attention than I should have done, perhaps, but I was never seriously in love with her."

"Ah! then the attraction was her resemblance to Opal. That proves that you cared something for her in the days before this last madness attacked you. Godfrey, I know you better than you do yourself. You are a general admirer of women, and you could no more be constant to one than your father could before you. *He* flirted with every pretty girl that fell in his way even after he was a married man; but he was kind and generous to me, as you will be to Opal when she is your wife; and she, like me, will learn to tolerate this fault in your nature."

By this time Fenton's excitement had nearly worn itself out, and he sat down moody, but no longer defiant. He felt that he was conquered, but he would utter no word to assure his antagonist of the victory she had won.

To marry Inez without the consent of Mrs. Markland was, to him, impossible; and every line of her face, every inflexion of her voice assured him that she was as firm as adamant as to the course he must pursue if he would preserve her favor.

After a long pause, which his mother would not break, Fenton said:

"This discussion can do no good. We only annoy and irritate each other without any result. I will consider what you have said, and I promise to take no decisive step without informing you beforehand. That is all I can do. I must review my own position and make up my mind to—to—what shall be my future course."

"Very well—that will be best. You know me well enough to comprehend that I never recede from what I have once said. I will not thrust Opal upon you; that will not be necessary. You must inevitably see a great deal of her, and I do not despair of seeing you as much charmed with her as you profess to be with your latest inamorata. You have not come home a day too soon for your own interests, for Guy has been devoting himself to her of late in a way that greatly displeased me. I spoke with him on the subject, and he took such offence at my words that he has left my house and has been staying with his sister for the last month, only visiting the plantation to see that the overseer is attending properly to his duties. He had the cool impertinence to tell me that you had found metal more attractive than your promised bride, and to say that you would bring me a gipsy daughter-in-law, with such a dower as would reconcile me to the match. From what you lately said, it seems that Miss Lopez has lost her fortune, but I assure you, if she were in possession of a million, my opposition to the match would be the same. I have long ago settled it that you are to marry Opal, and with my consent no other shall ever become your wife. Think over what I have said, and make up your mind, as I know you will, to act in this matter as every interest of your life requires you to do. Only give Opal a fair chance to win your heart, and I know she must succeed. Good night, my son; do not bear malice toward me because I am firm in withholding you from the gulf of poverty and obscurity into which you are so ready to plunge. No woman is worth the sacrifice of a man's prospects, however lovely and fascinating she may be."

Mrs. Markland held out her hand, and Fenton felt constrained to take it in his own. She came nearer to him, bent forward, kissed him on the forehead, and said:

"Are you so angry with me that you refuse to give me your usual good-night salute? I love you, Godfrey, better than any living creature, and I only act thus for your good. Remember that, and do nothing that will force me to tear you from my heart. In the event of your union with that girl, I would surely do it, even if my life were sacrificed in the struggle to cast you off."

Her voice faltered slightly as she uttered the last words, and she hastily left the room.

Fenton paced the floor many hours in a state of mind bordering on distraction; but view his position as he would, he could see no avenue of success to what he had most deeply at heart. His mother had clearly made up her mind that he should not follow the bent of his own inclinations, and alas! he felt that he did not possess the firmness to sustain himself against her strong will.

More than once he found himself recalling the sweet face that had smiled on him that day, with the feeling that Opal Hastings was not a girl to be lightly refused by any man, much less by him who had been considered as her betrothed from childhood.

He finally sought his pillow with the reckless feeling that events might take their course, and Fate lead him whither it would. He had made his struggle and signally failed, so he was not responsible for the result.

But he was very wretched—so wretched that he deserved pity even if he was so weak as to be unable to risk the loss of his mother's favor by following the dictates of his own heart.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

On the following morning Mrs. Markland met her son as kindly and serenely as if all memory of the conflict of the preceding night had passed from her mind. She knew that she held in her own hand the rein that could most effectually curb his rebellious impulses, and she had too much tact to widen the breach between them by any show of coldness.

She was gentle and affectionate in her demeanor, and tried to make him feel that as long as he was her obedient son, she would be to him the same affectionate mother she had shewn herself from his infancy. She had said all she intended to say on the subject of Inez Lopez, and she was willing to leave the rest to the fascinations of the fair rival she had provided for her.

Mrs. Markland did not believe that her son could prove insensible to Opal's charms, so she wisely left things to take their own course, satisfied that the result would be what she most ardently wished.

As soon as the morning meal was over, the ponies of Dora and Jenny were brought to the door, and attended by an elderly man, they set out for school, both of them internally rebelling against the fiat that separated them from their brother on this first day of his return to the home from which he had been so long absent. But both knew that remonstrance was useless, so they went upon their way.

Mrs. Markland exerted herself to talk pleasantly with Fenton till the hour for their visit arrived, and she triumphed in the thought that he was returning to his old allegiance; that the influence she had always held over him was fast regaining its power.

Fenton had a high admiration for his mother. He recognized the masculine strength of her character with that respect men of his calibre are apt to feel for it wherever it is to be found. Bitterly as he regretted his inability to compete with her on this question so vital to his happiness, he tacitly surrendered himself to her guidance, convinced that contention was useless.

When the carriage came to the door he was ready to hand her in, and accompany her to Silvermere, where he knew temptation awaited him in the shape of the lovely and attractive creature Mrs. Markland was bent on making his wife.

The road wound through an undulating and picturesque country, and after a drive of four miles, they came in sight of the place to which they were bound. The house stood half a mile from the road, and was approached by a serpentine avenue shaded by magnificent forest trees.

In a natural hollow on one side of this lay a deep, clear pool of water, from which the place derived its fanciful name. On the sloping bank stood a rustic pavillion made of the trunks of slender trees with the bark on, and thatched with moss. At the foot of a flight of stone steps a small sail-boat, gayly painted, lay idly rocking upon the water.

The house itself had few pretensions to architectural beauty. It was a massive and comfortable family mansion, built of brick and painted stone color, with a portico in front extending half its length. A green lawn, unbroken by the intrusion of shrubbery, spread away on either side, and, from the front of the dwelling, no cotton fields were visible.

Everything about the place was substantial and in good taste, and Fenton found himself looking around with the complacent thought that all this might some day be his own if he could only make up his mind to forsake Inez, and use all his efforts to win the beautiful heiress, not only of this wide domain, but of gold beyond his wildest dreams of affluence.

Mr. Hastings had emigrated from New York, a struggling lawyer, with little beside his fine person and captivating manners. But they had sufficed, for they had won him the position he now held through his wife. He married a young widow who had herself gained fortune through a loveless union with an old man, who was accommodating enough to make his exit from the scene in the second year of their marriage, and blind enough to make his widow the heir to his immense estate.

Her next choice was for love. She was devotedly attached to her husband, and, as had been hinted, was jealous to an absurd degree of every youthful or attractive woman who manifested the slightest interest in the man she considered her lawful property, who was bound to her by golden chains, if not by those of affection.

Mrs. Hastings fully appreciated all the obligations under which she had laid her husband by lifting him from poverty to affluence; and as he was by nature a man of gentle mould, she had gradually brought him to believe that as he owed everything to her, she was entitled to the unconditional submission of his life.

But if Mr. Hastings was hen-pecked, he was not contemptible; for he possessed so many amiable and redeeming qualities, that it was impossible for those intimately known to him not to love and admire him. Yet he had great faults, too. His was a character of mixed good and evil so often found in this lower plane of being.

Mr. Hastings was a devoted husband and father, and Opal loved him with a deeper and fonder affection than she bestowed on her affected, fine lady-mother. The sound of the carriage wheels brought both father and daughter on the portico, and as Mr. Hastings stands framed in the doorway of his dwelling, I will present him.

He was a tall, well-made man, of florid complexion and finely-moulded features; his brown hair was partially silvered, as was the long flowing beard that fell upon his breast; his eyes were of a light, glittering blue, full of genial feeling and animation. He wore a comfortably fitting suit of gray cloth, and a black satin vest. The arrangement of his toilette showed that he was careful of his appearance, and had by no means forgotten that in his more youthful days he had borne the sobriquet of the "handsome Hastings."

His manner was gracious and high-bred, and few men could comport themselves in society more agreeably thad he did.

Opal, in a dress of deep blue silk, trimmed with black lace, which rendered the brilliant fairness of her complexion more conspicuous, flitted past her father, and ran down the steps to receive the kiss with which Mrs. Markland greeted her. From childhood she had been a pet of the elder lady, and the affection was returned by that enthusiastic fondness which a young girl is apt to feel for a very handsome and elegant woman who makes much of her.

With perfect frankness, Opal gave her hand to Fenton as she said:

"We are so glad to have you back again, Godfrey. Papa has been talking of you all the morning, and he has ordered, *not* the fatted calf, but the fattest turkey, to be killed to-day in honor of your arrival; though I hope you won't imagine I mean to insinuate that he thinks you the prodigal son."

"I hope not, indeed," replied Fenton, resisting the gallant impulse to raise to his lips the fair hand that rested a moment within his own. "I need scarcely tell you, Opal, how glad I am to revisit old scenes and old friends again."

By this time the trio had ascended the steps, and after cordially greeting Mrs. Markland, Mr. Hastings warmly grasped the hand of the young man and said:

"I cannot tell you how rejoiced I am to greet you beneath my own roof once more, my dear boy. Your travels have greatly improved you, and I flatter myself that you will discover some change for the better in somebody else. Opal is almost a woman, as you see."

"Quite, I should say, and a most charming one, too. I had no idea that two years could have wrought such a change in the child I left behind me when I last went away."

Opal gleefully broke in:

"Yes, I have sprung up like the bean stalk of Jack the Giant Killer. I am quite as tall as mamma; but I am only a school-girl yet, Mr. Godfrey Fenton, and my maternal ancestress will put her veto on compliments, so you had better be on your good behavior."

He looked into the bewitching face of the fair speaker, fully sensible of its sweet girlish charm, and he thought:

"No wonder is it that she is admired, for she is lovely as the morning and gay as the sunshine. What accursed fate led me away from my own home to find a rival for this girl, who is fair enough to be loved for her own sake by any man not besotted by such an infatuation as possesses me."

Yes, it had come to this already, that he considered his passion for Inez an infatuation from which he must, at all hazards, arouse himself. He made a playful reply, and they all entered the wide hall, arched in the centre, with a winding staircase leading to the upper story.

Morocco-covered lounges stood against the walls, and beyond the arch was a sideboard, on which decanters of spirit and an array of goblets were placed.

Mrs. Hastings, in a gray moire-antique elaborately trimmed, and a lace cap ornamented with delicate flowers, appeared at the drawing-room door to welcome her guests. She was slightly rouged, and in a demi-light appeared almost too youthful to be the mother of a tall girl like Opal. She offered her hand to Fenton with the languid grace that characterized her, and drawled:

"Do not think that I am less eager than my husband and daughter to welcome you to Silvermere, Godfrey, because I did not hasten out as they did. I am not so robust or quick in my movements as they are, but my regard for you is as strong as that of either of them. But I need not tall you that, for, by this time, you ought to know in what estimation we all hold you."

Fenton lifted her hand to his lips, and gratefully replied:

"I cannot tell you how happy I am to receive such assurances, Mrs. Hastings, for I have been so long away that I feared I might have lost my place in the good graces of my old friends. It seems like home to me here and nothing is changed save Opal, who has grown into a fairy princess since I saw her last."

"Yes, my daughter has rapidly matured. People take her to be eighteen, but it is quite enough to have a tall girl like her calling me mother without having two years added to her age."

"What does that signify, dear madam, when you might pass for her elder sister?" was the gallant reply of the young man, for he knew that flattery was as welcome to the faded and exacting beauty as in the days of her blooming belle-hood.

Mrs. Hastings smiled sweetly, shook her finger at him, and said:

"You have not forgotten how to say pleasant things, I perceive, Godfrey."

And the party entered the large and elegantly appointed drawing-room.

A black servant appeared, to take the bonnet and mantle of Mrs. Markland, and they sat down near the bright wood-fire that burned on the hearth. Wine and cake were brought in, and Mr. Hastings said to Fenton:

"I need not ask you to take anything stronger, Godfrey, for I presume you are as temperate in your habits as in days of yore?"

Fenton bowed in reply, and, with a slight frown, Mrs. Hastings said:

"I hope you will not think of touching any thing more stimulating than wine yourself, William. This is excellent champagne, and, in my opinion, it is the only liquor a gentleman should drink."

"Pooh! my dear, that is ladies' tipple. Men of action like me prefer something that has more body to it. But, if you insist, I'll take a glass to drink to Godfrey's health and happiness."

The glasses were filled and the toast pledged. Fenton made a little speech that pleased his hearers, and he felt himself quite established on his old footing of familiar friendship in the house of Mr. Hastings.

Presently the bustle of another arrival was heard, and Mrs. Markland seemed slightly annoyed when Mrs. Langley entered, followed by her brother. She said to Opal, in a low voice:

"I had hoped, on this first day of my son's return to his old friends, that we should have you to ourselves, my dear. But of course I have no right to object to any guests your mother may have chosen to ask to meet us. Excuse me, I spoke without thought."

The flitting color that gave such a charm to the face of the young girl deepened almost to a rose-tint as she hastily replied:

"I am sorry that you do not like it, Mrs. Markland; but Mr. Denham and his sister are such near connexions of yours that mamma thought she must ask them to meet Godfrey to-day. No one else will be here."

"Connexions are often bores," thought the elder lady, but she smiled blandly, patted the cheek of Opal, and replied:

"It does not signify; what can't be helped must be borne with a good grace!"

And she turned to receive the greeting of the intruders as graciously as was possible in the state of vexation in which their advent had thrown her.

Mrs. Langley whispered to her brother:

"I told you that Aunt Gertrude would be annoyed if we came, and so she is. I know her too well to be mistaken."

"Well, let her be vexed; I chose to come, to look after my own interests," replied Denham in the same tone.

And he approached his stately relative, and offered his hand with quiet friendliness, after giving Fenton a greeting which had little warmth in it.

The two young men had spent their boyhood beneath the same roof, and a strong feeling of jealousy had grown up between them. As children they had been equally cared for in the house of Mr. Markland; but, after his death, a material difference was made. Then Guy was made to feel that he was a dependent, and Godfrey assumed the place of the son of the house.

Denham was noble, chivalrous, and high-toned by nature; yet he was but human, and he felt and resented in some measure the inferior position his uncle's widow forced him to assume. Since he attained manhood he acted as agent for Mrs. Markland, receiving a high salary for attending to her business affairs; but Denham knew very well that it had never been his uncle's intention that his step-son should be placed above his nephew.

From the large jointure secured to Mrs. Markland, she had it in her power to save many thousands annually; and Guy knew that this was done to enable her son, at some future day, to aspire to the hand of the girl on whom his own heart was set. Denham would gladly have married Opal Aastings without a penny to her fortune, but, aware of the family arrangement which existed, he had never betrayed his preference for her till after his return from Newport.

After the confidences which passed between Mrs. Langley and Fenton, and his assurances that he should never claim the hand of Opal, Denham had been less cautious, though he still considered her too young to be wooed as his wife. He was willing to "bide his time," and he began to indulge the sweet hope that Opal was not beyond his reach. Within the last few months some property had fallen to him from a distant relative, and Denham felt with joy that when he made known his pretensions to her family he could not be regarded as a needy fortune-hunter in pursuit of a well-endowed heiress.

Fenton shook hands with him and said:

"I must congratulate you, Guy, on the good luck that has befallen you. I hear that your cousin, Mark Denham, made you his heir. I only wish *I* had a rich relative who would be so accommodating as to step off the shores of time and leave me something handsome in his will."

"Thank you; but I scarcely think that you should ask for more than you will one day possess. Enough is enough for any man."

"You know the old adage, that 'a bird in the hand is worth two in the bush,'" replied Fenton, with a laugh.

His mother frowned, and with some stateliness said:

"With such prospects as yours, Godfrey, it seems absurd to speak thus about Guy's little fortune. At my death you will have twice as much."

"But I hope you'll live to the age of Methuselah, mother, and in the meantime, you know, a fellow likes to feel that he has something of his own to look to. The pitiful three hundred a year left me by my father seems absolute penury beside Guy's thousands. But I don't envy you, old fellow, in spite of what I have said; and I know that you will make a good use of your money."

"There is not so much of it, after all, Godfrey, but with good management it will form the nucleus of a fortune to be enjoyed some day."

"With some 'fair minister,' I suppose, who will become the Egeria of your life—eh, Denham?"

The dark expressive face of the young man flushed, and he glanced toward Opal as he replied:

"That is as it may be. I have not settled my future destiny, and all my plans may 'gang aglee.'"

Fenton noticed the look and understood it. He remembered what he had said to Mrs. Langley at Newport, and he doubted not that she had repeated his words to her brother. Now he regretted having spoken them and felt annoyed that the brother and sister should have become aware of his entanglement with Inez Lopez; for the consciousness that Denham was his rival with Opal awakened in his heart a strong desire to put forward his own claims on her.

With every passing moment Fenton felt himself more deeply fascinated by the artless child of nature he was urged to love, and with his natural inconstancy he began to think the fair one nearest to him at the moment the most attractive. It was the fault of his temperament, so why should we be too hard on him? and then he felt pressed to the wall by his imperious mother till no power of resistance remained in him.

It was fortunate for him, he thought, that he found Opal so charming, for it was evidently decreed that he should marry her, and after all, he might be able to forget her rival and be as comfortably happy with her as if the glamour of his passion for Inez had never been thrown over him.

Mrs. Langley presently turned to Fenton, and referring to the previous conversation, said:

"By the way, speaking of wills reminds me of the one in which your friend, Miss Lopez, was so deeply interested. Did she finally succeed in regaining her grandfather's estate?"

At the name of Inez a lightning flash came from the eyes of Mrs. Markland, but her audacious niece was impervious to its meaning and waited calmly for Fenton's reply. He coldly said:

"She did not. Miss Lopez gets nothing more than the annuity bequeathed to her by her aunt. The estate goes to charities."

She piercingly regarded him, and in a tone of sarcasm asked:

"And her adoring lover? Did he desert her when he found that she had lost her inheritance? I hope not—for I should be sorry to think so meanly of him as that, Godfrey."

He colored, shrugged his shoulders, and said:

"What would you have, Cousin Anna? It is the way of the world. The poor fellow loved her very dearly, but what could he do when her chances of fortune were gone? and her decrepit father left to be taken care of out of her pittance. It was a bitter struggle to him, I know, but it was made, and—it was *successful.*"

Fenton looked Mrs. Langley full in the eyes as he spoke the last word with such emphasis, and she understood that it was thrown as the gage of battle between them.

She contemptuously retorted:

"I am sorry to hear it, for if ever a man was bound in honor to a woman that one was bound to the poor girl who, in losing her fortune, lost everything. I feel the deepest sympathy for *her*, for she believed in him; she loved him far better than he merited."

"I dare say, but what says the proverb? 'Man is inconstant ever,' and this is but a new illustration of it."

"Yes—and I suppose her lover has already sought a new field of action. Such a trifler with women's hearts as he is must, of course, have a new love, as soon as he is off with the old one."

"Exactly—only with this difference, that the person in question only returned to his first allegiance, for he had loved another before he met with the fair Inez. Only for a season had his heart strayed from its legitimate possessor. When he was thrown with his early love again, his feelings revived in all their pristine force and freshness."

With cutting disdain Mrs. Langley replied:

"One would think such hearts put out at compound interest, to be recalled when most convenient for the worldly success of their owners. It is shameful to find that human nature can be so mercenary."

Fenton bit his lip and flushed angrily, but the reply he was meditating was interrupted by Opal, who had lost the greater portion of this duel of words while listening with brightening eyes and deepening color to some low-toned words spoken to her by Denham. They were not words of love, for he had not yet ventured so far, but his manner and tones made her blush she scarcely knew why.

She laid her hand on Mrs. Langley's and asked:

"Who are you denouncing so severely, my dear friend? It is not like you to be so harsh in your censures."

Mrs. Langley carelessly replied:

"Oh, never mind, my dear, who it was. Godfrey is intimate with the object of my indignation, and I trust that he will have the full benefit of my opinion of his conduct."

"You do not suppose that Godfrey will turn tale-bearer, I hope, Mrs. Langley, and make his friend uncomfortable by repeating to him your strong expression of disapprobation? Oh, fie! that would be giving him a character I am sure he does not deserve."

"No—I scarcely think he *will* repeat what I said just now," replied Mrs. Langley, very drily; and she turned to Mrs. Hastings and began to give her an animated description of some beautiful dresses she had received from New Orleans.

Mrs. Hastings listened with vivid interest, as she always did to anything concerning the toilette. She said:

"I always get my things from Paris. Such loves of robes and caps as those French people do make can't be matched anywhere else, and then their charges are so much more reasonable. Not that I care particularly about that; but when I get a thing I like it to be the best of its kind, and to know that I have paid no more than it is really worth."

"Yes, what we *buy* should be the best of its kind, and it is easy enough in the matter of clothes; but when it comes to something more important, we often fail to get our money's worth."

"What can you mean?" asked Mrs. Hastings, half inclined to be offended, in the belief that Mrs. Langley referred to the husband her own fortune had doubtless secured for her. "I am sure I do not understand you."

"Oh! I was only thinking of the many bogus things in this world that are taken in exchange for sterling gold; but I was not referring to you particularly. You have been singularly fortunate so far as you are *yourself* concerned."

Mrs. Markland frowned portentously, and curtly said:

"You are in one of your bitter and sarcastic moods to-day, Anna; and I suppose you will go on cutting right and left without regarding the feelings of others. I always dread an encounter with you when you are in such a humor."

"Don't be alarmed, Aunt Gertrude, for I have exhausted my venom for to-day, and I intend to be the pink of propriety till we part. You must be very happy to have Godfrey at home again, as I perceive that he comes in the most amiable and compliant of moods. Such an obedient son is a real treasure."

How far she was sincere, or whether all was bitter sarcasm, Mrs. Markland was at a loss to determine. She knew that Mrs. Langley was aware of Fenton's passion for Inez Lopez, and the passage at arms so lately ended between them she had not been able to understand; for, while it lasted, Mr. Hastings had been speaking with her on a subject of much interest to them both, and she was compelled to give him her undivided attention.

She steadily regarded her niece as she replied:

"I am glad to assure you that Godfrey is all that I could wish. If his fancies have, for a season, wandered from his home, and the interests centered there, I am happy to see that they are returning to their proper channels. The old influence is established again, and I am delighted to inform you that he finds Opal more charming than ever. He encountered her yesterday in Natchez, and came home quite enraptured with her beauty. She is looking her best to-day."

Mrs. Hastings had left them to speak with her husband, the young men were occupied with Opal on the opposite side of the room, and the two ladies enjoyed the opportunity of a tête-à-tête. Mrs. Langley replied to the last remark:

"Yes, Opal is always charming, and I am not surprised to hear that Godfrey was struck with her improved appearance. From your words, and his manner toward her, I suppose the other affair is at an end. Yet it seems a pity, for the poor girl was deeply attached to him, and I believe he loved her as well as he is capable of loving any one."

"Don't refer to that folly, Anna, if you please. It is disgusting to me to hear that Godfrey wandered for a single hour from his allegiance to Opal. She is the sweetest and loveliest creature in the world, and the only girl he shall ever bring home to my house as his wife."

"Will you not allow *her* a voice in the disposal of herself?" asked Mrs. Langley, with provoking coolness. "Perhaps she will not accept Godfrey after all, and she will be rich enough to choose a husband for herself."

Mrs. Markland drew herself up haughtily.

"*That* view of the case had not occurred to me, nor do I thank Mrs. Langley for suggesting it. *My* son is a fitting mate for the best in the land, and I flatter myself that he will not woo an unwilling bride."

"Oh! I didn't expect thanks, Aunt Gertrude. People don't often get them for speaking the plain truth. As to Godfrey, I used to think a great deal of him; but I am sorry to say that I am losing faith in him. But I won't annoy you by speaking ill of your heart's darling, and here comes Mrs. Hastings in the nick of time to bring me back to *les convenances.*"

She flitted away and joined the trio gathered around the piano. Fenton had opened the instrument, and, placing a favorite song on the music-stand, he requested Opal to sing it for him. She sat down to do so, but deprecatingly said:

"You will be disappointed when you hear me play, Godfrey, for I have had few musical advantages yet. After listening to such fine performers as you must have heard at the North, you will think my efforts scarcely worth notice."

"Allow me to be the judge of that, if you please. You have music in your soul, and I am persuaded that it must find expression through your fingers."

She laughed, and rapidly ran over the keys as she replied:

"You always have something pleasant to say at any rate, Godfrey; and if I tortured your ears with discords, you would manage to find some consolation for my failure. I like to be praised, remember, even if I know that I have not done well."

"Your music is always charming to me, Opal, and I am as critical a judge as Godfrey, I fancy, for my ear is more correct than his," said Denham.

She gave him a radiant glance, and dashed off into a brilliant waltz, to which her flying fingers gave full effect. When she paused she said:

"I had rather not sing to-day, so you must wait till some other time for your song, Godfrey. I play almost entirely by ear; but, oh dear, when my new governess comes I must begin to read notes and count time, I suppose. I quite dread what I shall have to go through with; but there is one comfort, she is a young lady, and papa says she will be as much of a companion for me as a teacher."

"Has your father actually engaged a governess for you?" asked Mrs. Langley. "I knew that he talked of it, but I was not aware that he had carried out his purpose."

"Yes, he has the promise of one, and she will be with us very soon now. She has been ill, or she would have been at Silvermere before this time."

"Who is she? Do you know anything of her?"

"Nothing except her name. She is a Miss Gordon from New Haven."

With all his command of countenance, Fenton felt himself growing pale at this announcement, and a look of consternation passed between the three persons near the speaker.

Mrs. Langley eagerly inquired:

"What is her first name? I knew a Miss Gordon from that place, but it is quite impossible that *she* is the person who has undertaken to instruct you, Opal."

"She has a very pretty name. Nina Gordon is but a few years older than I am, and papa thinks that I shall be quite charmed with her. I think so, too, for she has written a very pretty letter to my father, which he received only yesterday. She is on her way to Natchez by this time, under the care of Mr. Matson, who lately went north on some business."

[TO BE CONTINUED IN OUR NEXT.]

WOLVES BUFFALO-HUNTING.

A far-western traveller gives the following account of an attack by wolves on a buffalo:—Whilst the herd is together the wolves never attack them, as they instantly gather for combined resistance, which they effectually make. But when the herds are travelling, it often happens that an aged or wounded one lingers at a distance behind, and when fairly out of sight of the herd, is set upon by these voracious hunters, which often gather to the number of fifty or more, and are sure at last to torture him to death, and use him up at a meal.

The buffalo, however, is a huge and furious animal, and, when his retreat is cut off, makes desperate and deadly resistance, contending to the last moment for the right of life, and oftentimes deals death by wholesale to his canine assailants, which he is tossing in the air or stamping to death under his feet.

During my travels in these regions I have several times come across such a gang of these animals surrounding an old or a wounded bull, where it would seem from appearances that they had been for several days in attendance, and at intervals desperately engaged in the effort to take his life. But a short time since, as one of my hunting companions and myself were returning to our encampment with our horses loaded with meat, we discovered at a distance a huge bull encircled with a gang of white wolves. We rode up as near as we could without driving them away, and, being within pistol-shot, we had a remarkable good view, where I sat for a few moments and made a sketch in my note-book, after which we rode up and gave the signal for them to disperse—which they instantly did, withdrawing themselves to the distance of fifty or sixty rods; when we found, to our great surprise, that the animal had made desperate resistance until his eyes were entirely eaten out of his head, the grizzle of his nose was mostly gone, his tongue was half eaten off, and the skin and flesh of his legs was torn almost literally into strings. In this tattered and torn condition the poor old veteran stood bracing up in the midst of his devourers, who had ceased hostilities for a few minutes to enjoy a sort of parley, recovering strength and preparing to resume the attack in a few moments. In this group were some reclining to gain breath, whilst others were sneaking about and licking their chops in anxiety for a renewal of the attack; and others, less lucky, had been crushed to death by the feet or horns of the bull. I rode nearer to the pitiable object as he stood bleeding and trembling before me, and said to him, "Now is your time, old fellow, and you had better be off!" Though blind and nearly destroyed, there seemed evidently to be a recognition of a friend in me, as he straightened up and, trembling with excitement, dashed off at full speed upon the prairie in a straight line.

We turned our horses and resumed our march; and, when we had advanced a mile or more, we looked back and on our left, where we saw again the ill-fated animal surrounded by his tormentors, to whose insatiable voracity he unquestionably soon fell a victim.

VOICE AND SOUND.

It is a curious fact, that musical sounds fly farther and are heard at a greater distance than those which are more loud and noisy. If we go on the outside of a town during a fair, at the distance of a mile we hear the musical instruments, but the din of the multitude, which is so overpowering in the place, can scarcely be heard, the noise dying on the spot. To those who are conversant with the power of musical instruments, the following observation will be understood: The violins made at Cremona about the year 1600 are superior in tone to any of a later date, age seeming to dispossess them of their noisy qualities, and leaving nothing but the pure tone. If a modern violin is played by the side of one of those instruments, it will appear much the loudest of the two; but on receding a hundred paces, when compared with the *Amati*, it will scarcely be heard. The voice of man is endowed with purity of tone, in a higher degree than any of the vocal animals, by which, in a state of nature, it enables him to communicate with his fellows at a distance very remote. Providence has bestowed upon children a power of voice, in proportion to their size, ten times greater than the adult. In a state of nature, this serves them as a defence and protection; for it is well known that children have, by their cries, alarmed and kept off the attacks of the most furious animals.

* * *

—Reason can never show itself more reasonable than in ceasing to reason about things which are above reason.

* * *

—No books are so plain as the lives of men; no characters so legible as their moral conduct.

PICNIC-ING.

BY NATHAN D. URNER.

I.
A leafy island, bowered by tall trees,
A cove of silver, hushed from the far breakers;
A shallop, slanting shoreward with the breeze,
Brimful of merrymakers.

II.
The grating keel, the boat-stake nicely missed,
Young fellows laughing at each other's error;
Hoops disarranged, curls flustered from their twist,
The girls in pretty terror.

III.
The shore:—bright ankles glancing up the sward,
Strong arms and luncheon coming blithely after;
The nook selected, and the breathing, hard,
The jest and ringing laughter.

IV.
The rushing swing beneath the rustling limb,
The youngsters pushing and the lasses soaring;
Romping and frolic by the fountain's brim,
Croquet and battledoring.

V.
Garlands of wild-flowers shading many a brow,
And garnered poesies of wee blooms prized highly;
Strayed couples missed, and soft conjectures how
They slipped away so slyly.

VI.
The snowy cloth upon the emerald sod,
With platters few, but viands in profusion;
Ham and cold chicken—feasting for a god,
With fear of no intrusion.

VII.
Cool bottles dripping from the icy spring,
Old Sherry bubbling and bright Champagne popping;
Youth and high joyance, in a jocund ring,
Both thirst and hunger stopping.

VIII.
Blanche, with her beauty heightened by a blush,
Which hints some secret of her recent ramble;
Maud, all the prettier for her heated flush,
Her skirt torn by a bramble.

IX.
Helen and Annie flirting with their beaux;
Belle with her apron stuffed with dewy cresses;
Harry, the rascal, struggling for the rose
In Edith's raven tresses.

X.
Back to the cove:—a group of twelve or more,
All homeward-bent on tasks of love and duty;
A shallop, slowly gliding from the shore,
Freighted with health and beauty.

SCRAPS OF ADVENTURE.

FROM AN OLD SAILOR'S LOG-BOOK.

No. XX.

By SYLVANUS COBB, Jr.

A BRITISH MAN-OF-WARSMAN!

I had heard Jo. Long spin so many yarns of life and adventure on board a man-of-war that I had quite an idea of many of the technicalities; and when the sergeant told us we were wanted at the mainmast, I knew that we were to meet some high officer, as that is the place on board a war ship where all interviews are held between the officers and members of the crew. Behind the sergeant came the master-at-arms, who removed the irons from our wrists and ankles. He was a regular old sea-dog—this master-at-arms,—and after he had taken off our irons he looked into our faces. The expression upon his weather-beaten, corrugated features was a kind one, and I felt sure that he meant well towards us.

"Look 'e, mates," he said, in that gruff, hoarse, rumbling tone, which I never heard save from an old man-of-wars-man who has been in the way of giving words of command on shipboard, "ye'll see the old man hisself at the mast, an' ye can't do better'n to dowse yer peaks to him, an' let him have his own way. Ye're in for the cruise, an' I'd 'vise ye to start on good terms with him."

"You mean the captain?" I queried.

"Yes."

I thanked him, and then started with Fiddy to follow the sergeant.

"Becket," said my companion, as we passed out from beneath the topgallant-forecastle, "you can talk better'n I can, and I wish you'd go it. You know just what to say,—only let's try to be put into the same watch."

"I'll try," said I.

We reached the mainmast, and at the end of the fife-rail* stood the lieutenant whom I had seen on shore, and before whom we were taken when first impressed, and by his side stood a man wearing an epaulette upon each shoulder, by which mark I knew him to be a captain, as at that time lieutenants in the navy wore only one epaulette, and that upon the right shoulder. He was rather below the medium size, and I judged him to be not far from forty years of age—a little older, if anything; and the moment I looked into his face I made up my mind that he was a sailor, and that he had reached his present position by the way of successive promotions legitimately earned. He had that grizzled, iron look which must be the result of years of exposure; and though the habitual cast of his countenance was stern almost to savageness, yet there were twinkling lines about the corners of the eyes, and a peculiar upward tendency of the corners of the mouth, which betokened a substratum of real good nature. Before I had heard the sound of that man's voice I had made up my mind that he had but one face, and that his word was to be depended upon. His name was Trevelyan, and he had a brother who was an earl. He gazed upon us after we had been brought before him, running his eyes carefully over us, but dwelling particularly upon our faces. I had supposed that he would address my companion first, he being at least a dozen years my senior, and I yet but a boy; but he did not. He seemed to understand that I was the one to do the talking.

"Well, my men," he said, in a moderate, reflective way, "you got picked up when you least expected it, eh?"

I wondered if he expected an answer to this; and while I was wondering he proceeded:

"England needs every man in such a time as this."

Here was an opportunity to reply, for he meant to imply that we owed allegiance to the British king; so I touched my hat, and answered, as modestly as I could with frankness and truth:

"Captain, of course my companion and I both know that it is not our place to dispute with you. But you will allow me to say that a grave mistake has been commited. We are not English subjects, and never were. We were both born and reared in the United States, and were both regularly shipped on board the American ship *Naumkeag*; and when we were seized by your men we were on our way to our boat for the purpose of going off to our ship."

I stopped here; but as the captain did not speak, I presently continued:

"You will not wonder, sir, that we feel deeply aggrieved, and that we consider that we have been much wronged; but we are not foolish enough to make a bad matter worse by attempting to resist an authority that has full power over us. Still, sir, we deem it no more than right that we should be set on shore. It would not take you a long time, sir. If you would heave to now I have no doubt we could call one of these coasting boats to take us on shore."

The captain shook his head, and informed us that he could not think of such a thing. Said he:

"Your story is a plausible one, and may be true; but I must hold you until a proper court can decide upon your claim."

I was telling him that he had authority to decide upon the question, seeing that we could not yet have been entered upon the ship's books; when he stopped me by remarking that our names had been upon the books for some time.

"It's no use, my men—you are regularly shipped, and I shall hold you; and I may as well tell you first as last, that an order signed by the Angel Gabriel himself, if it wasn't countersigned by the Court of Admiralty, couldn't set you free. Mr. Bowers!"

The lieutenant touched his cap.

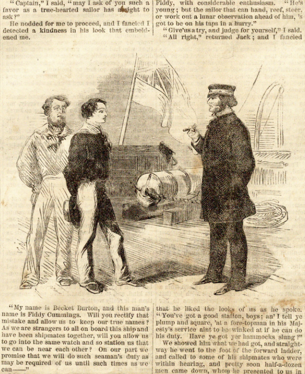
"What are these men's names?"

I forget what answer the lieutenant gave, only I remember that he gave two names which I had never before heard.

And upon this I saw through the whole thing. Those two names were upon the ship's roll, and Fiddy and I had been taken to answer to them; and I thought now was the time to gain any privilege we might need, before the captain had become fretful; for it was simply a fact past recall that we were to be held.

"Captain," I said, "may I ask of you such a favor as a true-hearted sailor has a right to ask?"

He nodded for me to proceed, and I fancied I detected a kindness in his look that emboldened me.



"My name is Becket Burton, and this man's name is Fiddy Cummings. Will you rectify that mistake and allow us to keep our true names? As we are strangers to all on board this ship and have been shipmates together, will you allow us to go into the same watch and so station us that we can be near each other? On our part we promise that we will do such seaman's duty as may be required of us until such times as we can——"

I hesitated, and he added:

"Make your escape, eh?"

"Yes, sir," I responded frankly, "until we can see an opportunity to give you the slip."

I had hit the right string. The old fellow liked my frankness, and I know that he trusted me a thousand times quicker than he would have done if I had made great protestations of bowing to his will and pleasure. He asked us what our rates had been; how much we knew of a sailor's duties, and the like, and then he told us to wait where we were and he would send the purser's steward to take care of us.

With that he went away; and, shortly afterwards, an officer whose only mark of distinction was one or two extra buttons upon the cuff of his jacket-sleeve came and bade us follow him. He led us down into his room on the berth-deck, where he took our names and ages, which he put down in a big book.

"*Becket Burton*," he pronounced, writing as he did so, "*aged twenty-one*——"

"No," said I, "not quite sixteen yet."

"Never mind," said he, with a nod and a wink, "you look nearer one-and-twenty than anything less. "*Becket Burton, aged twenty-one, born in Liverpool, Lancashire*——"

I made no more interruptions but allowed him to put down the minutes as he pleased; and, when that had been done, he served out to each of us a hammock, a mattress, a pair of blankets, a tin pot, pan, knife, and spoon; and then informed us that, whenever we wanted any article of clothing or anything else in the purser's department, we could apply. He also told us that the boatswain would let us have rings and spun-yarn with which to make clews for our hammocks; and then he led us out to a corner where a small desk was rigged against the bulkhead of the room from which we had just come, and there turned us over to the master-at-arms.

"Well, my hearties," said this gruff-voiced old sea-dog, "didn't ye find it as I told ye?"

I told him that we had, and I furthermore informed him that I guessed we should come out all right.

The old fellow gave a low grunt, and then, with a rapid succession of knowing winks, he said:

"I want to tell ye, my lucky 'uns, 'at ye're right side up; an' now all ye've got to do is to just keep yer weather eyes open an' do yer duties. Jes' now the bo's'n's-mate come down, an' says he, 'Jack, yer wanted at the mast.' So up I went, an' there stood the old man hisself, an' says he to me, 'Master-'t-arms, look out for them two new men. Let 'em swing their hammocks together if ye can.' Now, ye see, *that* means more'n a mere cap full o' wind. Never mind what more he told me. If he told me to keep an eye on ye, be sure I shall do it. D'ye understand?"

I understood the old fellow very well, and thanked him for his kindness; and I furthermore told him that we had both made up our minds that we should do our duty as well as we knew how.

Touching the swinging of our hammocks we were in luck. There had been, during the cruising of the ship thus far, an open space between the main-hatch and the doors of the purser's and the surgeon's store-rooms, and this had left a passage between the hammocks of the men forward and the hammocks and swinging cots of the warrant officers aft. At Cape Town hooks had been put into the beams for the swinging of hammocks in this space, and two of these berths were given to Fiddy and myself,—the most desirable location, by all odds, on the deck. We had made sure of the numbers of our hammock hooks, and taken their bearings, so as to find them handily, when I heard another voice, very much like that of the master-at-arms, only it was a richer voice—a voice the very first notes of which were significant of fun and humor, and at the same time of strength and character.

"*Hallo! Where away, here?*"

I turned and beheld a dumpy, bow-legged, brown-faced, grizzled looking man, with a silver anchor worked upon the upper part of each of his jacket sleeves. As I looked upon him I thought of a man who had been soaked in salt water, and dried in the sun and wind until his flesh had become fairly curled like a piece of jerked beef.

"Where's the new men? Be they you, me hearties?"

"What is it, Jack?" returned the master-at-arms.

"Becket Burton an' Fiddy Cummings," said the new comer.

"Here they are," said I.

The man looked us over carefully from head to foot, and said he guessed we'd do.

"Are they turned over to you?" asked the master-at-arms.

"Yes."

"Good for you again," cried our friend, turning to us. "This is Jack Miller, Capt'n o' the fore-top——"

"*And* the starboard watch," broke in Jack; "and you two 'ave been set down for that crew. I hope ye're sailors?"

"I can answer for Becket Burton," cried Fiddy, with considerable enthusiasm. "He's young; but the sailor that can hand, reef, steer, or work out a lunar observation ahead of him, 's got to be on his taps in a hurry."

"Give'us a try, and judge for yourself," I said.

"All right," returned Jack; and I fancied that he liked the looks of us as he spoke. "You've got a good station, boys; an' I tell ye plump and square, 'at a fore-topman in his Majesty's service aint to be winked at if he can do his duty. Have ye got yer hammocks slung?"

We showed him what we had got, and straightway he went to the foot of the forward ladder, and called to some of his shipmates who were within hearing, and pretty soon half-a-dozen men came down, whom he presented to us in turn as fore-topmen in his watch.

And from that moment Fiddy and I were surrounded by friends. They knew that we had been impressed, and when they saw us take it in a common-sense way, they gave us their sympathy and assistance. Jack Miller took us both into his mess, and we sat down to breakfast, feeling quite at home, despite the cruel situation in which we were placed. When we had finished our breakfast, our watch was called on deck—it being past eight o'clock—and Fiddy and I were on duty! It seemed more like a dream than like reality, and more than once I found myself, as I have often done when dreaming a horrible dream, trying to arouse myself, to see if I could not awake to find it all a phantasy. But this was all real—solemnly and fearfully real.

And now, dear reader, you shall know where I was, and what I was: I was a fore-topman on board his Britannic Majesty's sloop-of-war *Bristol*.

The Bristol was a first-class corvette, or sloop-of-war, carrying eighteen 24-lb, long-medium guns upon her deck, and one long 18-lb chaser upon her topgallant forecastle. She had what is called a poop-cabin,—that is, the cabin floor was simply a continuation of the spar-deck, being decked over flush with the top of the bulwarks, with the bulkhead a few feet abaft the mizzen-mast. This poop-deck, however, was broken over the bulkhead chock up to the mast, and beneath the shelter thus formed was the wheel, with a binnacle upon each side of the mast. Four of the guns were in the cabin, and the bulkhead was so arranged that it could be taken away very quickly if such a thing should be found necessary during an action.

The crew consisted of a captain, three lieutenants, a sailing-master, two passed-midshipmen, four midshipmen, a second lieutenant of marines, four warrant officers—boatswain, gunner, carpenter, and sail-maker—and about two hundred and fifty men, including petty officers; but a portion of these were meant for supplying one or two ships at Gibralter—her regular compliment of men being not over two hundred, all told. The captain's name was George Trevelyan; the first lieutenant's, Albert McGregor; the second lieutenant's, Thomas Bowers; and the third, Charles Leigh. Touching the other officers, it is time enough to introduce them when we have occasion. One or two of them, poor fellows, I may have occasion to mention on the threshold of another world.

I must close this Scrap of Adventure with a simple bit of experience which was annoying enough at the time, but over which I have laughed in memory many, many times since.

To tell the plain truth, I had some doubts about my being able to get into my hammock the first time without a blunder of some kind. It was something I had never yet done, to sleep in a hammock, and as my hammock was hung very near to the main-hatch ladder, and as there were a full score of men sitting around the foot of the ladder, upon the combings of the berth-deck hatch, I concluded that I would wait until I came off at midnight, and then I should have a chance to make the trial with perhaps not a soul to watch me.

I stood and watched a number of the men go into their hammocks, and at length I fancied I could see how it was done, and, as the shrinking patient shuts his eyes and swallows a disgusting dose of medicine, so I shut my teeth and went at it. I stood as I had seen others stand,—I laid one hand upon the hammock, and grasped a hook overhead with the other. *One—two—three*,—and I jumped! But I had miscalculated. I gave the hand that rested upon the hammock a lateral pressure, and away went my bed, bumping against its neighbor, while I landed upon the deck just as I had started. There was a laugh at this, and I joined in it. But I saw the secret now. The next time I looked out to bear down upon the hammock, so that it should not swing away from me. Once more I made ready: *One—two—three*,—and in I went! I landed fairly upon the hammock; but I hesitated about letting go the hook with my right hand until I had fixed myself; the result of which was that the hammock took a swing in the opposite direction from what it had taken before, and I found myself incontinently spilled out upon the other side!

Fiddy—(plague take the rascal!—he had been in a hammock before)—now came to my assistance, having joined the others in a laugh at my expense.

"Becket," said he, "grasp this yere hook in this fashion, and then just lay yer other elbow right where the small o' yer back's a goin' to come. So,—there,—that's it! Now, mind,—just lift yerself kind o' keerful like, an' land right in the middle; an' the secret is, 'at there can't be no possible danger arter ye're in if ye only let yerself drop, and don't go to hanging on to somebody else's hook or clews. Now go it.—There!"

How simple it was; and how soundly I slept in that nest after I had overcome the first momentary feeling of insecurity; and from that time it has never been my fortune to rest in any other bed so easy and so grateful in every respect, as is a properly clewed and well-hung hammock.

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[*] Generally on board a heavy ship a transverse rail at the mast in which belaying pins are fixed for securing the running rigging. Sometimes the "fife-rail" is in a circular form around the mast.

NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Petroleum.—"I should like to know," writes this desponding gentleman, "if suicide could *ever be excusable*, for if it could, I think that *my* case would be one of the excusable sort. The facts are that in an evil hour I was induced to embark my entire fortune—some sixty thousand dollars—in oil speculations, all of which turned out to be worthless, and the consequence is that I am a ruined man. Before I lost my fortune I was the richest man in the county where I live, and was engaged to be married to a lovely girl, whose parents are also rich. Not to make a long story of it, since it has become certain that my money is clean gone, without any hope of its ever coming back again, the parents of my betrothed have set themselves against me, and have at last induced her to give me up also and engage herself to another man, who is *now* a better match, so far as wealth is concerned, than I am. Thus you see *all* my hopes in this world are blasted. With a loving wife by my side, for whom I could have worked like a hero, I might have fought the battle of life successfully; but as it is, I have nothing left to live for, and might as well die at once. What can a man do in such a case to make life tolerable?" In such a case a man should call up all his manliness, *and act like a man*, and not like a girl. You ought to go to work to retrieve your fortunes, and by the time you get everything fairly under way, you will probably be in a fit state of enlightenment and experience for marriage.

A Consumptive wants to say that "Minnesota air will not cure consumption after the disease has become well seated." He says, "I came here in December, 1865, very weak, and unable to sit up but a few hours at a time, but am now almost a well man. I found the winter air rather too severe for me, and had a bad cold and cough. But the hot weather has brought me up." The efficacy of Minnesota air in curing pulmonary diseases seems to be a *personal* matter with every one who goes there. Some cannot stand the hot weather, but thrive in the autumn and winter; others cannot stand the cold weather, but find the hot weather highly beneficial; some receive immediate benefit from the air, and others die soon after their arrival in the State. It comes to this, then, that every person must try the experiment for himself. The chances are greatly in favor of its resulting beneficially; and a consumptive is seldom if ever made any *worse* by a visit to Minnesota.

Philadelphia says that he "kept company with a lady of fine personal appearance for about three years," and adds, "at the expiration of that period I married her, and found that I had been outrageously deceived. She was made up of pads, and puffs, and all sorts of tackle. When I think of the matter, it fairly makes me sick to find out how deceptive women can be. I feel as though I had been *inveigled*. What could I do to right myself in the matter? Can I get a separation from the court?" It is not at all likely that "the court" could help you out of your dilemma. Any public contest with your wife, on such a subject, would cover you with unsparing ridicule, and would make you a public laughing-stock for life. When a man gets into such a difficulty, he should keep silent about it and make the best of the matter.

Husband Lover.—You are either half demented, or else you are a great scamp. A married man who can coolly state that he "does not love his wife as he once thought he did, and never has since he first saw a certain married lady with whom he at once fell in love almost to madness, and whom he has lost trace of and must find again or else suffer more than man should be called upon to bear," must be either a madman, or else such an unmitigated monster of selfishness and vice as to be absolutely incapable of moral perceptions. The best thing for you to do is to give up all thoughts of that "certain married lady," at once and forever, and try to live an honest, irreproachable life.

Old Man.—According to the statement which you make there is no evidence that your son-in-law intended to insult you by omitting to ask you to come to dinner at the time he invited the others. You say that you are *living* with him; and that being so, you would naturally go to dinner without invitation, as you are in the habit of doing every day. It is quite natural for you to be sensitive in your dependent condition, and you doubtless give yourself and your friends a vast deal of trouble by imagining slights, and insults, and neglects, that no one ever thought of putting upon you.

Leclear.—You can learn to read and write French without a teacher, but not to speak it with a correct accent and pronunciation. Such an industrious, conscientious and talented girl as you seem to be will be sure to make her way by some proper means or other. Your devotion to your little sister will bring its sure reward. It would be advisable for you to go to work at your French at once, and do your best *without* a teacher, and the chances are that some French scholar will appear in the remote hamlet where you live, by the time you reach a point at which you would most need a preceptor.

Ambrose.—You are doubtless right in maintaining that when a personal assault is made upon an able-bodied man, and the latter shows the white feather, he sinks in the estimation of his friends and the public generally. Self-defence is universally recognized as a moral duty as well as an instinct which is inseparable from the possession of animal life; and the man whose only means of defence lies in his heels is always certain to be looked upon with contempt even by those whose principles lead them to condemn physical violence under any but extraordinary cases.

N. E.—Perhaps the charge which Sin gave to Death on their arrival on this globe, (as represented by Milton,) will give you some notion "how such things go on:"

"Thou therefore on these herbs, and fruits, and flowers,
Feed first; on each beast next, and fish, and fowl;
No homely morsels! and whatever thing
The scythe of Time mows down, devour unspared;
Till I, in man residing, through the race
His thoughts, his looks, words, actions, all infect;
And season him thy last and sweetest prey."

Kentucky.—If you have found out beyond all chance of mistake, as you claim to have done, that "the young lady was already engaged to another young man" at the time she accepted your offer of marriage, and that she is now all the time corresponding with him, it would not only be "safe," but highly discreet for you to throw up the engagement.

John.—It is not likely that any girl of sense would act so there could be no doubt as to her feelings towards you, until you had settled all her doubts as to what *your* feelings were towards *her*. If you want the young lady referred to to act so you "can understand just what she thinks" of you, you must first tell her just what you think of her.

Jeddo.—It may be that "the chances are now good for enterprising young Americans to make their fortunes in Japan, as that country is just opening up to our trade;" but the only way in which you can test the matter is to go to Japan and try it on practically. No one can now give you accurate and trustworthy information on the subject.

Miller.—The only way that you can find out what county in Virginia would be the best for your business of milling, will be to take a trip through the country and see for yourself. The chances are that a practical miller, such as you describe yourself to be, who is handy and expert at repairing and fitting up, would find an abundance of employment in Virginia.

Emily.—There would be no impropriety in a lady's making a present to a dear friend on the occasion of his marriage.

E. L.—Your indignation against the Mexicans for "not rising to a level with their great opportunities," &c., is quite thrown away; and, besides, it is unreasonable. The Mexicans have no "great opportunities." They are an ignorant and almost a barbarous people, being a mixture of Aztecs, Toltecs, Anahuacs, Slascalans, and other original Indian races, promiscuously blended with negro and Spanish blood, with a dash of nearly all the buccaneering and scoundrel elements that have ever figured in that portion of the globe. In addition to all this, the masses of Mexico have for many years been the prey of numberless adventurers who have in turn humbugged, persecuted and robbed them without stint or mercy. And now, as all the world knows, they have just succeeded in shaking off a gigantic foreign despotism, and are left in a state of anarchy and beggary. What "great opportunities," then, have they? As for the sentimental and theatrical howlings of Victor Hugo on the subject, no one in power cares for them, and it is useless for you to quote them with any view to *practical* effects. Government, in this world, and so far as nations are concerned, is a matter of force—of downright, vulgar, material force; and unless you can back your wishes with something more potent than rhetoric, you will labor in vain in your efforts at rectifying the international short-comings of the great powers of the earth.

Pacific Shore.—Here comes a letter from far-off Oregon, freighted with lovers' woes. "We are two honest young people," says the writer, "who have got into a bad situation by allowing our pride and feelings to run away with us. We were engaged to be married, and loved one another as we should; but you know the course of true love never runs smooth in this world. Well, we got into a huff with each other for a mere trifle and broke off our engagement. I was soon engaged to another girl, and the young lady was also soon engaged to another young man. So things went on. But we happening to meet, and getting to talking over matters, found that neither of us loved the new partners, but were as strongly attached to one another as ever; but our new lovers are faithful to each of us, and would no doubt feel very bad if they knew how things really are. Now, then, what shall we do to set matters straight? It seems to be rather a hard case, but it must be decided somehow, and that very soon. Please tell us what we can do." You have acted foolishly and wrongly, and ought to tell the "new partners" just how the case stands. It may be that they would be so indignant at you, they would fall in love with one another and get married just to show how little they cared for you.

Historian.—This "historian" wants to know "if *Stonewall* was really the rebel General Jackson's Christian name." He is going to write a history of the war, and wants to be sure as to his facts. Our correspondent's handwriting and every thing about his letter shows him to be a man of intelligence; and yet it is probable that many of our readers will be ready to say that "no man of intelligence would ever ask such a question." Volumes have been written about Stonewall Jackson; probably there was not a newspaper in the United States that did not have an explanation of the manner in which he acquired his nick-name, and yet there are doubtless thousands who imagine that "Stonewall" was his Christian name, and who have no idea that he was really christened Thomas Jefferson Jackson.

Mother.—As you do not tell us where you live, we have no idea of the local legal usage which might apply to your case. The *general rule* of law is, that, when husband and wife separate without a divorce, the husband is entitled to the custody of the children, (except in the case of a nursing-babe) and is responsible for their maintenance. The two things usually go together. But it is now customary for the court, when its aid is invoked, to examine into the particular facts of the case before it, and to award the custody of the children to that parent who is shown to be the one best entitled to it. It is a rule, in such cases, to look solely to the best interest of the children, all things considered, and not to permit the court to be used as an instrument of vengeance by either of the contending parties.

J. P.—The "old salt" was evidently talking nonsense to you, and practicing on your credulity. Your knowledge of geography, if you have any such knowledge, should protect you against making such an absurd blunder as to suppose that a schooner could run from the Cape Verde to the Gallipagos islands in thirteen days. If you will look at a map, you will see that such a thing would be impossible. The famous and fabulous Flying Dutchman, with his ghostly ship and ghostly crew, could hardly make such a run as that. It would require the schooner to make over a thousand miles a day even without allowance for deviations from the directest possible course.

Warrior.—There could be little, if any, doubt as to our ability to conquer Mexico so far as to capture and hold her principal cities and disperse her armies is concerned; but to reduce that country to utter subjection and *peaceful possession* would require many years, perhaps half a century. The mountains of Mexico afford such admirable haunts for bands of troops and guerrillas, and the Mexicans are so accustomed to guerrilla life, that it would be almost an impossibility, and would cost incredible sums, to protect the inhabitants against their outrages.

Virginius.—The "Field of the Cloth of Gold" is not a "mere fiction." It is a name that was given to an open plain, between Ardres and Guisnes, where, in the year 1520, Henry VIII. of England had an interview with Francis I. of France. The nobility of the two kingdoms embraced the opportunity to enter into a competition of display and extravagance, and the result was such a profuseness of expense and splendor as to originate the historical appellation—"The Field of the Cloth of Gold."

Principle.—If your friend "has no settled principles of right" he will be pretty certain to do many unprincipled things. The "very moral class of men" that you refer to, who ignore principle, and religion, and God, are not apt to hold out long in their well-doing; and their morality, at the best, is a mere sham and delusion. Your good old grandmother's simple faith and Christian life afford you a much better model for imitation than can be found in all your friend's brilliant philosophy.

Persecuted.—It is a great piece of folly for you to arraign Providence on account of your misfortunes. Your grumblings are almost blasphemous. It would be much more sensible and manly, not to say Christian, for you to accept the lessons which events ought to teach you, in a humble spirit, and grappling with your necessities with patience and fortitude, work your way, with the help of Heaven, up to a higher place of life than you seem to have occupied for some time past.

Iphegenia.—It is exceedingly unfortunate for a man to imagine that he has "married beneath him," and still more unfortunate for him to allow others to perceive that he thinks so. Such conduct in a husband would be dishonorable towards his wife, and the man who is capable of it must be badly tinted with snobbery. The wife, in such a case, would of course be subjected to many slights which a decent husband would not have suffered to be put upon her.

Hindoo.—The threat of your servant to poison the lady who offended her was an outrageous piece of business, and should not be passed over without notice. If *you* are "afraid to offend the girl," you should send her back to her native jungle in Hindostan. One might just about as well have a rattlesnake in the house as one of those superstitious and malignant East Indians.

Reader, Watertown, N. Y.—The sketch to which you refer, "A Lawyer's Story," was written expressly for the *Ledger*, and published by us in our issue of June 9, 1866. Sylvanus Cobb, Jr., is the author of it. It was not written for your local paper; and that paper in publishing it as original has been imposed upon.

O. B. J.—It is a great piece of folly for a decent man to enter into a war of vituperation with a loafer. No credit could possibly be gained in such an encounter, and the disreputableness is certain to cling to one for an indefinite period.

W. S. P.—You can learn the names of all the States and their capitals by consulting any school geography. Many of the almanacs which are given away, or hawked about the streets, contain the information which you seek.

Gallipagos.—If you want to hunt up a fortune among the islands of the Pacific ocean, you will probably have a long chase for it. You could do better at wood-sawing in any country-village in the United States.

Belle.—The engagement ring is worn on the first or fore-finger of the left hand, and the wedding-ring is worn on the third finger (that is, the one next the little finger) of the same hand.

Fonda.—Yes; Benedict Arnold's wife *was* living at the time his treason was discovered; and they had one child—a boy,—at that time an infant in the cradle.

Boy.—If you want to go to sea mainly for the purpose of "seeing as many distant countries as possible," you should ship on a vessel that trades to the East Indies, China and Japan.

⁂ *Several letters stand over to be answered in our next.*